

Department of Health and Human Services

Administration for Children and Families

Administration on Children, Youth and Families

Children's Bureau

Application Package to Request Financial Assistance

Adoption Opportunities Demonstration Activities

Child Abuse and Neglect Discretionary Activities

Child Welfare Training Project Activities

Promoting Safe and Stable Families Activities

FY 2003

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Program Announcement No. CB-2003-01**

Announcement of the Availability of Financial Assistance and Request for Applications to Support Adoption Opportunities Demonstration Activities, Child Abuse and Neglect Discretionary Activities, Child Welfare Training Project Activities, and Promoting Safe and Stable Families Activities.

Agency: Children's Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth and Families

Action: Announcement of availability of financial assistance and request for applications to support activities under the Adoption Opportunities Program, title II of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment and Adoption Reform Act of 1978, as amended, [42 USC 5111]; Section 104 of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), as amended [42 USC 5101 et seq.]; Section 426 in title IV-B, subpart 1, of the Social Security Act, as amended, [42 USC 626]; and Section 430 in title IV-B, subpart 2, of the Social Security Act, as amended, [42 USC 629].

Summary: The Children's Bureau (CB) within the Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF), Administration for Children and Families (ACF) announces the availability of fiscal year (FY) 2003 funds for competing new activities under the Adoption Opportunities Program, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), the Child Welfare Training Program, and the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. Funds from the Adoption Opportunities Program are designed to provide, among other things, support for demonstration projects that facilitate the elimination of barriers to adoption and provide permanent loving homes for children who would benefit from adoption, particularly children with special needs. Funds from CAPTA support research and demonstration projects on the causes, prevention, and treatment of child abuse and neglect. Funds from the Child Welfare Training program support grants to public or other non-profit institutions of higher learning for special projects for training personnel for work in the field of child welfare. The Promoting Safe and Stable Families program is intended to prevent the unnecessary separation of children from their families by funding family support, family preservation, time-limited family reunification and adoption promotion and support services as well as research, evaluation and technical assistance relating to such services.

Deadline: The closing date for submission of applications is July 25, 2003. Mailed applications postmarked after the closing date will be classified as late.

Mailed applications shall be considered as meeting an announced deadline if they are either received on or before the deadline date or sent on or before the deadline date and received by

ACF in time for the independent review to: **Educational Services, Inc. , 1150 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC, 20036, ATTENTION: ACYF GRANTS OPERATION CENTER (telephone number 800-351-2293)**

Applicants must ensure that a legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark or a legibly dated, machine produced postmark of a commercial mail service is affixed to the envelope/package containing the application(s). To be acceptable as a proof of timely mailing, a postmark from a commercial mail service must include the logo/emblem of the commercial mail service company and must reflect the date the package was received by the commercial mail service company from the applicant. Private Metered postmarks shall not be acceptable as proof of timely mailing. (Applicants are cautioned that express/overnight mail services do not always deliver as agreed.)

Applications hand-carried by applicants, applicant couriers, or by other representatives of the applicant shall be considered as meeting an announced deadline if they are received on or before the deadline date, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., EDT, at **Educational Services, Inc., 1150 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC, 20036, ATTENTION: ACYF GRANTS OPERATION CENTER (telephone number 800-351-2293)**, between Monday and Friday (excluding Federal holidays). (Applicants are cautioned that express/overnight mail services do not always deliver as agreed.)

ACF cannot accommodate transmission of applications by fax or through other electronic media. Therefore, applications transmitted to ACF electronically will not be accepted regardless of date or time of submission and time of receipt.

Late applications: Applications which do not meet the criteria above are considered late applications. ACF shall notify each late applicant that its application will not be considered.

Extension of deadlines: ACF may extend application deadlines when circumstances such as acts of God (floods, hurricanes, etc.) occur, or when there are widespread disruptions of mail service, or in other rare cases. Determination to extend or waive deadline requirements rests with the Chief Grants Management Officer.

For Further Information Contact: Grants Management Officer, Grants Officer, Sylvia Johnson at 202-401-4524 (e-mail SYJohnson@acf.hhs.gov); Program Officer, Patricia Campiglia, at 202-205-8060 (e-mail pcampiglia@acf.hhs.gov); Application technical assistance contractor, Educational Services, Inc. at 800-351-2293.

This announcement package is also available online at
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/funding/index.htm>

The required Federal forms are available online at
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/grants/form.htm>

Applicants should note that grants to be awarded under this program announcement are subject to the availability of funds.

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PART I. Background

A. General Information on the Administration on Children, Youth and Families and the Children's Bureau

The Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) administers national programs for children and youth; works with States and local communities to develop services which support and strengthen family life; seeks joint ventures with the private sector to enhance the lives of children and their families; and provides information and other assistance to parents. The concerns of ACYF extend to all children from birth through adolescence. Many of the programs administered by the agency focus on children from low-income families; abused and neglected children; children and youth in need of foster care, independent living, adoption or other child welfare services; preschool children; children with disabilities; runaway and homeless youth; and children from Native American and migrant families.

Within ACYF, the Children's Bureau plans, manages, coordinates, and supports child abuse and neglect prevention and child welfare services programs. It administers the Foster Care and Adoption Assistance Programs, the Child Welfare Services State Grants Program, Child Welfare Services Training Program, the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, the Adoption Opportunities Program, the Abandoned Infants Assistance Program, the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program, the Court Improvement Program, programs funded under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), including Basic State grants, the Child Abuse and Neglect Discretionary Program, the Community-Based Family Resource and Support Program, and the Children's Justice Act Program.

The Children's Bureau programs are designed to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of all children, including those in foster care, available for adoption, recently adopted, abused, neglected, dependent, disabled, or homeless children and to prevent neglect and abuse of children. The programs also encourage strengthening the family unit to help prevent the unnecessary separation of children from their families and reunifying families, when appropriate, when separation has occurred. The Children's Bureau supports programs and services that encourage marriage; promote family stability; support relationship building for parenting couples; reach out to and provide assistance to fathers; and emphasize the role of fathers in ensuring the well-being of their children.

The Children's Bureau provides leadership and conducts activities designed to assist and enhance national, State, and community efforts to prevent, assess, identify, and treat child abuse and neglect. These activities include data collection and analysis; research and demonstration programs, and grants to States for: developing comprehensive child-centered and family-focused child protective services systems; providing training and technical assistance to develop the necessary resources to implement successful comprehensive child and family protection strategies; providing for mutual support and parent self-help programs; gathering, processing, and housing high-quality data sets through a National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect;

and gathering, storing, and disseminating child maltreatment information through a National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information and a National Adoption Information Clearinghouse.

State child welfare systems are designed to protect children who have suffered maltreatment, who are at risk for maltreatment, or who are under the care and placement responsibility of the State because their families are unable to care for them. These systems also focus on securing permanent living arrangements through foster care and adoption for children who are unable to return home. The Children's Bureau is the agency within the Federal Government that is responsible for assisting State child welfare systems to promote continuous improvement in the delivery of child welfare services. Knowledge development activities, such as these discretionary grants and training grants, contribute to that continuous improvement effort.

The Children's Bureau welcomes applications from public or private non-profit agencies and organizations with a demonstrated commitment to improving the range and quality of programs and services available to children, parents and families. The Children's Bureau encourages applications presenting plans that involve and promote collaborative partnerships between local, regional, State or national groups. Applications that include partnerships of broad-based organizations, agencies and community-based and faith-based groups will be accepted. However, one agency must be identified as the applicant organization and will have legal responsibility for the grant. The Children's Bureau has a long-standing commitment to promoting service delivery on the local and community level. Community-based and faith-based organizations may submit applications alone or in partnership with other agencies or organizations in accordance with the ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS information accompanying each priority area.

B. Legislative Framework

This section provides an overview of legislation applicable to Children's Bureau programs. It addresses Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act (SSA), the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997, the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA) as amended by section 1808 of the Small Business Job Protection Act, and the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). It also briefly reviews other policies and rules pertaining to improving services to and outcomes for abused and neglected children, children in foster care, and children awaiting adoptive families.

Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act With the passage of Public Law 96-272, the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980, the Federal government, through titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act (SSA), emphasized the need for permanency for children in foster care and the importance of permanency planning and timely decision-making for these children. The 1994 Amendments to the SSA, among other things, authorized the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to review State child and family service programs in order to ensure substantial conformity with the State plan requirements in Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. The Child and Family Services Review (CFS review)

covers child protective services, foster care, adoption, family preservation and family support, and independent living. These reviews are designed to assist States in improving child welfare services and outcomes for recipient families and children by identifying strengths and areas needing improvement within State programs, as well as areas where technical assistance can lead to program improvements. For more information about the reviews see www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/cwrp/index.htm

Child and Family Service (CFS) Reviews: Outcomes and Results-Focused Monitoring

On January 25, 2000, HHS issued a Final Regulation to establish a new approach to monitoring State child welfare programs that emphasize outcome-focused monitoring and accountability. The CFS Review measures State compliance with the State plan requirements under Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. Federal regulations at 45 CFR 1355.31-37 govern these State program reviews. HHS uses statewide data indicators and qualitative information to determine achievement in two areas: (1) outcomes for children and families in the areas of safety, permanency, and child and family well-being; and (2) systemic factors that directly impact the State's capacity to deliver services leading to improved outcomes. Each outcome is evaluated using specific performance indicators as follows:

Safety Outcomes:

- Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
- Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

Permanency Outcomes:

- Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.
- The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.

Child and Family Well-Being Outcomes:

- Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
- Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
- Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

The systemic factors being reviewed are related to the State's ability to deliver services leading to improved outcomes. The systemic factors include: (1) statewide information systems; (2) case review system; (3) quality assurance system; (4) staff and provider training; (5) service array; (6) agency responsiveness to the community; and (7) foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention.

Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA) The passage of the landmark Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (P. L. 105-89) further amended the SSA and established unequivocally that our national goals for children in the child welfare system are safety, permanency, and well-being. ASFA focuses on moving children who are languishing in the system into adoption or other permanent placements, and it seeks to change the experience of

children entering the system to increase the timeliness of securing permanency for them. ASFA embodies the following five key principles:

- The safety of children is the paramount concern that must guide all child welfare services.
- Foster care is a temporary setting and not a place for children to grow up.
- Permanency planning efforts for children should begin as soon as a child enters foster care and should be expedited by the provision of services to families.
- The child welfare system must focus on results and accountability.
- Innovative approaches are needed to achieve the goals of safety, permanency, and well-being.

To implement these principles, the law requires that child safety be the paramount concern in making service provision, placement, and permanency planning decisions. It reaffirms the importance of making reasonable efforts to preserve and reunify families, but also specifies that States are not required to make efforts to keep children with their parents when doing so places a child's safety in jeopardy. To ensure that the system respects a child's developmental needs, the law includes provisions that shorten the time frame for making permanency planning decisions, authorizes the use of concurrent planning to expedite permanency, and establishes a time frame for initiating proceedings to terminate parental rights.

Indian Child Welfare Act The Indian Child Welfare Act [25 USC 1901 et seq.], passed in 1978, governs the jurisdiction, placement, termination of parental rights, and adoption of Native American children. It provides key standards that must be met by States when working with Tribal children, including notice to Tribes of State custody; standards for placement of Indian children in foster homes and termination of parental rights; active efforts to provide rehabilitative services; transfer of jurisdiction to Tribal courts and preferred placement of Indian children with extended families and other Indian families; and the Tribal right to intervene in State custody proceedings. Though not administered by the Children's Bureau, knowledge of ICWA may be important to some applicants.

Multi-Ethnic Placement Act The Multi-Ethnic Placement Act of 1994, as amended by section 1808 of the Small Business Job Protection Act, prohibits the delay or denial of any adoption or placement in foster care due to the race, color, or national origin of the child or the foster or adoptive parents and requires States to provide for diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children for whom homes are needed. MEPA also prohibits agencies from denying the opportunity to become foster parents or adoptive parents based on race (see 471 (a) (18) of SSA). In 1996, MEPA was amended by the provision for the Removal of Barriers to Interethnic Adoption included in the Small Business Job Protection Act. Section 1808 of P.L. 104-188 affirms the prohibition against delaying or denying the placement of a child for adoption or foster care on the basis of race, color, or national origin of the foster or adoptive parents or the child involved [42 USC 1996b].

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Since 1974, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act has addressed the entire child protective services system, from the prevention of

child maltreatment to the identification of child abuse and neglect, initial response, assessment and investigation of suspected child abuse reports, and prosecution of caregivers found to be the perpetrators of the abuse [42 USC, Section 5101 et seq.,]. The 1996 amendments to CAPTA [Public Law 104-235] amended Title I, replaced the Title II Community-Based Family Resource Centers program with a new Community-Based Family Resource and Support Program and repealed Title III, Certain Preventive Services Regarding Children of Homeless Families or Families at Risk of Homelessness.

The CAPTA Basic State Grant provides States and local public agencies with the funds and basic Federal guidelines to develop and maintain their child protective services (CPS) systems. CAPTA, under the Children's Justice Act, also provides funds to assist States in developing, establishing and operating programs which are designed to improve three main areas: the handling of child abuse and neglect cases to reduce trauma to the child victim; the handling of cases of suspected child abuse or neglect related fatalities; and the investigation and prosecution of cases on child abuse or neglect. Title II of CAPTA is the legislative authority for the Community-Based Family Resource and Support program to assist States to develop and implement, or expand and enhance a comprehensive statewide system of community-based family resource and support services to prevent child maltreatment.

CAPTA also provides funds for discretionary research and demonstration projects which support research on the causes, prevention, and treatment of child abuse and neglect; demonstration programs to identify the best means of preventing maltreatment and treating troubled families; and the development and implementation of training programs. Grants for these projects are provided nationwide on a competitive basis to State and local agencies and organizations. Projects have focused on every aspect of the prevention, identification, investigation, and treatment of child abuse and neglect.

Child Welfare Services Training The Child Welfare Services Training program awards grants to public and private non-profit institutions of higher education to develop and improve education and training programs and resources for child welfare service providers. These grants upgrade the skills and qualifications of child welfare workers through their participation, full-time or part-time, in programs focused specifically on child welfare services.

Promoting Safe and Stable Families The Promoting Safe and Stable Families program, (title IV-B, subpart 2, of the Social Security Act) authorizes grants to States and eligible Indian tribes to develop, expand and operate coordinated programs of community-based family support services, family preservation services, time-limited family reunification services, and adoption promotion and support services. The purpose of the program is to assist States and Indian tribes: 1) to prevent child maltreatment among families at risk through the provision of supportive family services; 2) to assure children's safety within the home and preserve intact families in which children have been maltreated, when the family's problems can be addressed effectively; 3) to address the problems of families whose children have been placed in foster care so that reunification may occur in a safe and stable manner in accordance with the Adoption and Safe

Families Act of 1997; and 4) to support adoptive families by providing support services as necessary so that they can make a lifetime commitment to their children. The legislative language authorizing the program also reserves funds to support the Court Improvement Program, to conduct evaluations on programs funded by the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program (or similar programs funded through other sources) and to provide technical assistance to States and Indian tribes.

C. Statutory Authority Covering Discretionary Grant Programs in this Announcement with the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Numbers

Adoption Opportunities: Title II of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment and Adoption Reform Act of 1978, as amended, [42 USC 5111] CFDA: 93.652

Child Abuse and Neglect: Section 104 of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, as amended [42 USC 5101 et seq.] CFDA: 93.670

Child Welfare Training: Section 426 in title IV-B, Subpart 1, of the Social Security Act, as amended, [42 USC 626] CFDA: 93.648

Promoting Safe and Stable Families: Section 430 in title IV-B, subpart 2, of the Social Security Act, as amended, [42 USC 629] CFDA: 93.556

D. Tips for Preparing a Competitive Application

The Children's Bureau's web site (<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb>) provides a wide range of information and links to other relevant web sites. Before you begin preparing an application, we suggest that you learn more about the mission and programs of the Children's Bureau by exploring the website.

Any non-profit organization submitting an application must submit proof of its non-profit status in its application at the time of submission. Any of the following constitutes acceptable proof of such status:

- a. A reference to the applicant organization's listing in the Internal Revenue Services' (IRS) most recent list of tax-exempt organizations described in the IRS Code.
- b. A copy of a currently valid IRS tax exemption certificate.
- c. A statement from a State taxing body, State attorney general, or other appropriate State official certifying that the applicant organization has a non-profit status and that none of the net earning accrue to any private shareholders or individuals.
- d. A certified copy of the organization's certificate of incorporation or similar document that clearly establishes non-profit status.
- e. Any of the items immediately above for a State or national parent organization and a statement signed by the parent organization that the applicant organization is a local non-profit affiliate.

Each priority area section includes Evaluation Criteria that will be used by reviewers to evaluate and score each application and which apply only to that particular priority area.

Demonstration Projects Fiscal Year 2003 Priority Areas A1, A2, A3, B2, D1 and D4 are demonstration projects. At the Children's Bureau a demonstration project is one that puts into place and tests new, unique or distinctive approaches for delivering services to a specific population. Demonstration projects may test whether a program or service that has proven successful in one location or setting can work in a different context. Demonstration projects may test a theory, idea, or method that reflects a new and different way of thinking about service delivery. Demonstration projects may be designed to address the needs of a very specific group of clients, or focus on one service component available to all clients. The scope of these projects may be broad and comprehensive or narrow and targeted to specific populations. A demonstration project must:

- (a) Develop and implement an evidence-based model with specific components or strategies that are based on theory, research, or evaluation data; or, replicate or test the transferability of successfully evaluated program models;
- (b) Determine the effectiveness of the model and its components or strategies using multiple measures of results; and
- (c) Produce detailed procedures and materials, based on the evaluation, that will contribute to and promote evidence-based strategies, practices and programs that may be used to guide replication or testing in other settings.

Project Evaluation Plan Project evaluations are very important components in many of the priority areas in this announcement. If you do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, comprehensive evaluation of the project, then the Children's Bureau advises that you propose contracting with a third-party evaluator specializing in social science or evaluation, or a university or college, to conduct the evaluation. A skilled evaluator can assist you in designing a data collection strategy that is appropriate for the evaluation of your proposed project.

Additional assistance may be found in a document titled "Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation." A copy of this document can be accessed at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/core/pubs_reports/prog_mgr.html or ordered by contacting the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, 330 C Street, SW, Washington, DC 20447; phone (800) 394-3366; fax (703) 385-3206; e-mail nccanch@calib.com

There are many evaluation models and evaluation terms and these models and terms can be used in a variety of ways. The following information is intended to help applicants prepare a responsive evaluation plan.

A competitive evaluation design includes *process and outcome* components. The *process* component describes the activities of the project, how the project operates, how well the design was followed, and the extent to which it accomplished each proposed task or activity.

The services provided and goods produced by the project include the number of people participating in a program or receiving a service, the number of products or services delivered, or the number of responses to an outreach program. These products and services are sometimes evaluated as a part of the *process*, are sometimes put into a separate category called *outputs* and are sometimes considered to be short-term or engagement *outcomes*.

The *outcome* component measures indicators of the actual impact or effect a program's activities have on the problem or situation. For example, what benefits did children derive from this activity? How did participant knowledge, attitude, and behavior change? How did the activities improve child welfare agency practices and outcomes? The evaluation design should include strategies for periodic assessment of program performance and describe the plan for using this information.

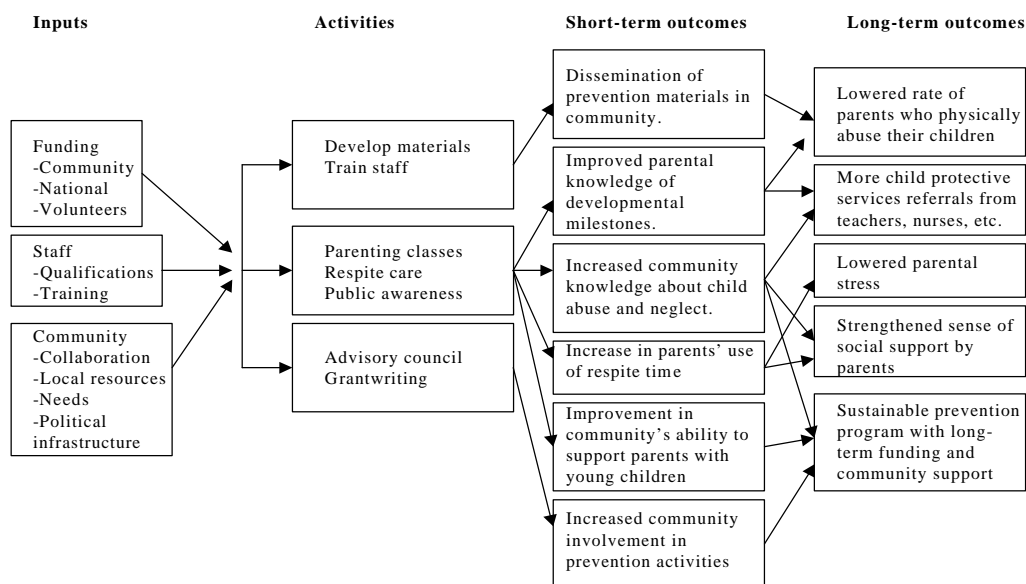
Processes or activities are what a program delivers and are the means to achieving desired outcomes. Outcomes are what the program hopes to achieve with each target group. They are the intended *results* of the program, not the *process* of achieving them. Short-term outcomes are the direct results of the program activities on its participants. They show a measurable change (often starting with "to increase" or "to decrease") and should logically lead to the desired long-term outcomes. Long-term outcomes are the ultimate goals of the program.

A logic model is a tool that presents the conceptual framework for a proposed project and explains the linkages among program elements. While there are many versions of the logic model, they generally summarize the logical connections among the needs that are the focus of the project, project goals and objectives, the target population, project inputs (resources), the proposed activities/processes/outputs directed toward the target population, the expected short- and long-term outcomes the initiative is designed to achieve, and the evaluation plan for measuring the extent to which proposed processes and outcomes actually occur.

The logic model should also describe the indicators and tools that will be used to count the services and goods produced by a program, the number of people receiving a service, number of services delivered, the number of responses to an outreach, and the actual impact or effect a program's activities have on the problem or situation. Measures are expressions, in a quantifiable form, that indicate the degree to which the program is achieving its objectives.

A logic model can be illustrated as a set of activities or processes displayed in boxes and connected with arrows to results or outcomes. A simple logic model is shown in the exhibit below.

Exhibit: Sample Logic Model for a Child Abuse Prevention Demonstration Program



The simple logic model in this exhibit shows a set of inputs including community need, existing services, staff qualifications, existing collaboration, funding sources and political infrastructure. These inputs connect logically to the project activities. Activities or processes designed to address child abuse prevention include parenting classes, respite care, and a public awareness campaign. These activities connect logically to the project's intended outcomes. The short- and long-term outcomes are expressed in specific, objective, and measurable terms. A complete logic model would also describe the target population and the evaluation plan, including indicators and measurement tools.

Information on the development of logic models is available on the Internet at

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/>

or

http://www.extension.iastate.edu/cyfar/capbuilding/outcome/outcome_logicmdir.html

Use of human subjects: If your evaluation plan includes gathering data from or about clients, there are specific procedures which must be followed in order to protect their privacy and ensure the confidentiality of the information about them. Applicants planning to gather such data are asked to describe their plans regarding an Institutional Review Board (IRB) review. For more information about use of human subjects and IRB's you can visit these web sites:

http://ohrp.osophs.dhhs.gov/irb/irb_chapter2.htm#d2

and

<http://ohrp.osophs.dhhs.gov/humansubjects/guidance/ictips.htm>

One Final Tip: It is essential that applicants read the entire announcement package carefully before preparing an application and include all of the required application forms and attachments. The application must reflect a thorough understanding of the purpose and objectives of the Children’s Bureau priority-area initiatives. Reviewers expect applicants to understand the goals of the legislation and the Children’s Bureau’s interest in each topic. A “responsive application” is one that addresses all of the evaluation criteria in ways that demonstrate this understanding. Applications that are considered to be “unresponsive” generally receive very low scores and are rarely funded.

PART II. Priority Areas

A. Priority Area List

Each application must be written in response to only one of the following Priority Areas, which are described later in this Part:

2003A: Adoption Opportunities Demonstration Activities

- 2003A.1 Adoptive Placements for Children in Foster Care
- 2003A.2 Projects to Improve Recruitment of Adoptive Parents in Rural Communities
- 2003A.3 Developing a National Network of Adoption Advocacy Programs
- 2003A.4 Administration of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA)

2003B: Child Abuse and Neglect Discretionary Activities

- 2003B.1 Fellowships for University-Based Doctoral Candidates and Faculty for Investigator-Initiated Research in Child Abuse and Neglect
- 2003B.2 Improving Child Welfare Outcomes through Systems of Care

2003C: Child Welfare Training Project Activities

- 2003C.1 Professional Education for Public Child Welfare Practitioners:
 - 2003C.1A: Professional Education for Prospective MSW Level Public Child Welfare Staff (Awarding MSW Degree)
 - 2003C.1B: Professional Education for Current Public Child Welfare Agency Staff (Awarding BSW and/or MSW Degree)
 - 2003C.1C: Professional Education for Prospective and Current American Indian and or/ Alaskan Native Public Child Welfare Staff who are currently enrolled or plan to enroll in BSW or MSW Social Work Programs (Awarding BSW and /or MSW Degree)
- 2003C.2 Training for Effective Child Welfare Practice in Rural Communities
- 2003C.3 Developing Models of Effective Child Welfare Staff Recruitment and Retention Training
- 2003C.4 Training for Healthy Marriage and Family Formation
- 2003C.5 National Evaluation of Child Welfare Training Grants

2003D: Promoting Safe and Stable Families Activities

- 2003D.1 Replication of Demonstrated Effective Practices in the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect
- 2003D.2 Evaluations of Existing Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Programs
- 2003D.3 Evaluations of Existing Family Support, Family Preservation, Reunification, or Adoption Promotion and Support Programs
- 2003D.4 Projects to Develop Programs to Strengthen Marriages

B. Available Funds

The Administration on Children, Youth and Families proposes to award up to 116 new grants in fiscal year 2003 from the competition resulting from this announcement. The funding is up to \$11 million for Adoption Opportunities (Priority Area 2003A), up to \$5 million for CAPTA (Priority Area 2003B), up to \$7 million for Child Welfare Training (Priority Area 2003C), and up to \$3 million for the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (Priority Area 2003D).

The size of the actual awards will vary. The Federal government may elect to fund applications in FY 2004 out of the pool of applications submitted under this announcement, subject to the availability of resources in FY 2004 and the number of acceptable applications received.

NOTE: The following information from the ACF Uniform Project Description (UPD) approved under OMB Control Number 0970-0139 applies to information collections including applications for the Federal financial assistance described in this application package.

C. Project Description Overview

INTRODUCTION

Applicants required to submit a full project description shall prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions and the specified evaluation criteria. The instructions give a broad overview of what your project description should include while the evaluation criteria expand and clarify more program-specific information that is needed.

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance must be demonstrated and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly stated; supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as needed. In developing the project description, the applicant may volunteer or be requested to provide information on the total range of projects currently being conducted and supported (or to be initiated), some of which may be outside the scope of the program announcement.

APPROACH

Outline a plan of action which describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors which might accelerate or decelerate the work and state your reason for taking the proposed approach rather than others. Describe any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement.

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function or activity in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

If any data is to be collected, maintained, and/or disseminated, clearance may be required from the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This clearance pertains to any "collection of information that is conducted or sponsored by ACF."

List organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES

Provide information on the applicant organization(s) and cooperating partners such as organizational charts, financial statements, audit reports or statements from CPAs/Licensed Public Accountants, Employer Identification Numbers, names of bond carriers, contact persons and telephone numbers, child care licenses and other documentation of professional accreditation, information on compliance with Federal/State/local government standards, documentation of experience in the program area, and other pertinent information. Any non-profit organization submitting an application must submit proof of its non-profit status in its application at the time of submission.

The non-profit agency can accomplish this by providing a copy of the applicant's listing in the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) most recent list of tax-exempt organizations described in Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code, or by providing a copy of the currently valid IRS tax exemption certificate, or by providing a copy of the articles of incorporation bearing the seal of the State in which the corporation or association is domiciled.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Provide line item detail and detailed calculations for each budget object class identified on the Budget Information form. Detailed calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. The detailed budget must also include a breakout by the funding sources identified in Block 15 of the SF-424.

Provide a narrative budget justification that describes how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

D. Priority Area Descriptions

2003A: Adoption Opportunities Demonstration Activities

The major efforts mandated by the authorizing Adoption Opportunities program legislation, section 205 of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment and Adoption Reform Act of 1978, (P.L. 95-266), as amended, include:

- The development and implementation of a national adoption information exchange system;
- Increasing services in support of the placement in adoptive families of minority children who are in foster care and have the goal of adoption, with a special emphasis on the recruitment of minority families; and
- Increasing post-legal adoption services for families who have adopted children with special needs.

In these areas, research and demonstration grants are awarded through a competitive process to States, local government entities, federally recognized Indian Tribes and tribal organizations, faith-based and community-based organizations with experience in working with adoption, colleges and universities, public or private non-profit licensed child welfare or adoption agencies, and adoption exchanges.

Funded projects have provided the field with the opportunity to develop collaboration strategies and models to increase the number of adoptions and to provide innovative services and tests of new service delivery models to strengthen families who have adopted children. Funded projects have assisted with child protective services' efforts to achieve permanency for children in the child welfare system and have focused on assisting States to improve their ability to meet the needs of the rising numbers of children waiting for permanent families.

While profiles of children in foster care vary from State to State, children with "special needs" constitute the majority among those waiting for adoption. The definition of special needs varies by State; nevertheless, the term generally refers to "older" children or children with any one of the following characteristics: membership in a minority ethnic or racial group; developmental problems and behavioral disorders; physical disabilities; history of abuse or neglect; or need for sibling-group placement. One or more of these attributes may contribute to delay or prevent a child's timely placement in a permanent home, including an adoptive home.

Projects previously funded by the Children's Bureau have demonstrated that adoptions can be facilitated by designing and implementing plans for permanency early in the child's placement process, by better coordination between adoption agencies and communities, and by court procedures designed to achieve permanency through timely adoption. Parent support groups and foster care and kinship care activities all contribute to moving toward permanency. When placements have occurred, ongoing post-legal adoption services help sustain those placements. Available resources for adoptive placements, as well as skilled and experienced staff for

recruitment and retention of adoptive families also were essential to the recruitment of families that reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of children seeking permanent homes.

Applicants for Fiscal Year (FY) 2003 activities are encouraged to develop innovative initiatives that promote the elimination of administrative, court-related, and service barriers that hinder adoptions of children with special needs. These initiatives should secure and sustain permanency for children who are either legally available for adoption, or those who are not yet available, but for whom adoption is the goal.

2003A.1 Adoptive Placements for Children in Foster Care

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Eligibility is limited to State social service agencies. In order to support the broadest range of issues and approaches, priority will be given to applicants who have not been funded under this priority in previous years. However, applicants previously funded under this priority area will not be precluded from receiving grants.

PURPOSE: To develop programs to assist States in their efforts to increase the adoption of children in foster care who are legally free for adoption or for whom adoption is an established goal.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The number of children adopted either from foster care or with some form of public agency involvement has increased substantially from 31,000 in 1997 to 50,000 in FY 2000. However, as of September 30, 2000, preliminary estimates indicate that 130,000 children in foster care were waiting to be adopted. Of these, the parental rights of 75,000 children had been terminated and the remainder had a goal of adoption. On average, the children were 8 years old and had been in the foster care system continuously for 3 to 4 years. Two-thirds were children of color. The annual number of children free for adoption is expected to grow as the States aggressively implement the Adoption and Safe Families Act. To meet the permanency needs of these children States need to increase their efforts for finalizing adoptions for them.

NOTE: Activities funded under this priority area are demonstration projects. See Section I for more information on preparing a successful demonstration project application.

REVIEW CRITERIA: The following specific criteria will be used to review and evaluate the applications in this priority area. The applicant should answer each question listed under each criterion. It is strongly recommended that applicants organize their proposals around these criteria, so that reviewers can readily find information that directly addresses each of the specific review criteria. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

CRITERION 1: OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

- (1) Describe how the proposed project would contribute to achieving the goals and objectives of the Adoption Opportunities legislation.
- (2) Explain the vision of the service model you anticipate developing and describe how it compares to the existing system.
- (3) Describe the goals and objectives of the proposed project. (Goals are herein defined as the end products of an effective project and objectives are defined as measurable steps for reaching these goals.)
- (4) Describe the context of the proposed project. Include a description of the geographic location, characteristics of the community (socioeconomic and demographic) and target population (age, race, ethnicity, length of stay in foster care, number of children waiting

and legally available for adoption), magnitude and severity of the problems and needs to be addressed.

- (5) Describe the needs of adoptive parents for initial and on-going support, including the need for marriage support for newly adoptive parents to sustain these new families.
- (6) Describe the benefits that clients would derive and estimate the number of clients (children waiting for adoption, prospective adoptive parents) to be served. Explain the basis for these estimates.
- (7) Explain how the proposed project would build local capacity to provide services to children waiting for adoption and increase adoptive placement of those in foster care after Federal funding has ceased.
- (8) Describe and summarize the relevant research and best practice literature regarding child welfare, foster care, and adoption. Explain how the proposed program design is evidence-based and how it reflects up-to-date knowledge of this research and best practice literature.
- (9) Describe and summarize current initiatives in the field of foster care and adoptive placements (particularly for children with special needs as described in the introduction to this section) and explain how the proposed approach would build on or differ from these initiatives.
- (10) Describe the linkages between the proposed program's activities and its intended outcomes.
- (11) Describe how the proposed project is innovative and how it will contribute to increased knowledge of the problems, issues, and effective strategies and practices in the field.
- (12) If successfully implemented and evaluated, explain how the proposed project would yield findings or results that would contribute to and promote evidence-based practices.
- (13) Explain how the proposed project's findings or results would be useful to other agencies and organizations in developing services and programs, would benefit national policy and practice, and would identify issues for additional research in the field.
- (14) Describe how the components and strategies of the proposed project would be documented so that the successful elements of the approach could be replicated by other agencies addressing the same or similar problems.
- (15) Explain why the proposed project has potential for implementation in other settings.

CRITERION 2: APPROACH (50 points)

- (1) Describe the plan of action for implementing the proposed project.
- (2) If the project involves sub-contracts or partnerships with other agencies and organizations, explain the roles of each partner. These roles should be clearly specified.
- (3) Explain why the proposed program design is feasible and appropriate to address the needs of the target population.
- (4) Describe the plan for documenting project activities and results, including the development of a data collection infrastructure that is sufficient to support a methodologically sound and rigorous evaluation.

- (5) Describe the data which would be collected on individuals and families, the types of services provided and used, and the types and nature of needs identified and met. Explain how these data would be collected, and how informed consent would be secured. Describe plans regarding an Institutional Review Board (IRB) review, if applicable.
- (6) Explain how the plan of action would lead to measurable improvements in the proportion of placement of children in foster care with adoptive families during the period of the grant.
- (7) Explain how the proposed project would establish and maintain effective linkages with other appropriate agencies and organizations on the local, State or Federal level serving the target population.
- (8) Describe the specific steps designed to ensure that the proposed project would build local capacity and yield results that would extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance as a part of the agency's ongoing program.
- (9) Describe in detail the specific services which would be provided under the proposed project.
- (10) Explain how the proposed services would bridge gaps in the current service-delivery system and benefit the recipients and the target community.
- (11) Describe ways in which the proposed services are innovative and explain how they involve the demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.
- (12) Show how the proposed services are comprehensive in scope and how they would address a broad range of the target population's needs, including marriage support for newly adoptive parents to sustain these new families.
- (13) Explain how the proposed services would involve the collaboration of appropriate partners (external and internal) for maximizing the effectiveness of service delivery.
- (14) If proposing to serve a specific target population in a specific geographic location, explain how the project would deal with non-target population applicants who may respond to the project.
- (15) Describe the plan for evaluating achievement of project goals and objectives, customer satisfaction, processes, outcomes, impact, the effectiveness of project strategies and the efficiency of the implementation process. Agencies that do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, comprehensive evaluation of the project are advised to contract with a third-party evaluator specializing in social science or evaluation, or a university or college to conduct the evaluation. If not using internal resources for project evaluation, describe the plan for securing an external evaluator.
- (16) Show how the logic model for this project demonstrates strong links between proposed inputs and activities, and intended short-term and long-term outcomes. (See Section I of this application package for more information on logic models.)
- (17) Describe how the proposed methods of evaluation would include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and would produce quantitative and qualitative outcome data.

- (18) Explain how the proposed methods of evaluation would provide performance feedback and periodic assessment of program progress and how this feedback would be used to make on-going program adjustments.
- (19) Describe the plan for evaluating the innovations used to improve the adoption of children in foster care, and the successes and failures of these innovations; collecting and analyzing data to determine placement rates and the types of clients served (e.g., waiting children, prospective adoptive families); providing for the collection of data to determine the availability of adoptive families during the program period; and gathering descriptive information on the processes and procedures used in implementing the project.
- (20) Explain why the proposed methods of evaluation are feasible, comprehensive and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and context of the proposed project.
- (21) Show how the proposed evaluation plan would be likely to yield findings or results about effective strategies, and contribute to and promote evaluation research and evidence-based practices that could be used to guide replication or testing in other settings.
- (22) Describe the plan for committing 10-15 percent of the proposed budget to project evaluation. (This evaluation can be conducted using in-house or in-kind resources, or through a contract. Agencies that do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, large-scale evaluation are advised to propose contracting with a third-party evaluator, university or college, specializing in social science evaluation, to conduct the evaluation.)
- (23) Describe the products that would be developed during the proposed project (e.g. questionnaires, interview guides and other data collection instruments, software designed for the proposed project, Internet applications, web postings, technical reports, journal articles, and a final report describing the target population, issues addressed, project design, implementation, outcomes and the results of the project evaluation) and explain how these products would provide information that supports evidence-based improvements of practices in the field.
- (24) Describe the intended audience (e.g., researchers, policymakers, and practitioners) for product dissemination, explain why this audience is appropriate to the goals of the proposed project and show how the project's products would be useful to each of these audiences.
- (25) Describe the plan for disseminating information on strategies utilized and the outcomes achieved. Describe the mechanisms and forums which would be used to convey the information and support replication by other interested agencies.
- (26) Describe the schedule for developing these products, and explain why the proposed dissemination plan is appropriate in scope and budget.

CRITERION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES (20 Points)

- (1) Describe the management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality.
- (2) Describe factors which could speed or hinder project implementation, and explain how these factors would be managed.
- (3) Describe the roles and responsibilities of the lead agency, the time commitments of the project director and other key project personnel (including evaluators or consultants), and explain why these roles, responsibilities and time commitments are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.
- (4) Describe the strategies for ensuring timely staffing and implementation. (Applicants are expected to have the project fully staffed and ready for implementation within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.)
- (5) List the organizations and consultants which would work with the proposed program as sub-contractors and/or partners (if applicable). For each of these, describe the nature of their effort or contribution and describe the plan for managing and coordinating these activities. Include a letter of commitment or Memorandum of Understanding from each sub-contractor describing the role of the sub-contractor, detailing specific tasks to be performed, and expressing commitment to participate in the proposed project. In the event that a proposed partner fails to fulfill their assigned roles and functions, describe the plan for quickly securing a satisfactory replacement.
- (6) Describe the timeline for the project, including the sequence and timing of the major tasks and subtasks, important milestones, reports, and completion dates. Describe factors that may affect project implementation or outcomes and the strategies for the resolution of these difficulties.
- (7) Describe the plan for training project staff as well as staff of cooperating organizations.
- (8) Describe the plan for ensuring compliance with all Departmental regulations and procedures pertaining to confidentiality and careful handling of information on individuals, families and evaluation data, and obtaining informed consent from participants.
- (9) Describe the technical skills, knowledge and experience which the proposed project director, key project staff and consultants have with similar projects and with this target population.
- (10) Present evidence that staffing is adequate to successfully carry out the proposed project on time, within budget and with a high degree of quality; including administration, program services, data processing and analysis, evaluation, reporting and dissemination of findings.
- (11) Include brief resumes of current and proposed staff, as well as position descriptions. (Resumes must indicate the position that the individual will fill, and each position description must specifically describe the job as it relates to the proposed project.)

- (12) Describe experience which the applicant has with similar projects and the target population, and/or in developing and implementing innovative programs or service-delivery systems in the field of child welfare, foster care, and adoption.
- (13) Describe organizational resources which the applicant commits to the proposed project, including administration, program operations, management information systems, data processing and analysis, evaluation, reporting and dissemination of findings.
- (14) Describe experience which sub-contractors and partnering organizations have with similar projects and the target population and explain how they are otherwise qualified to fulfill their assigned roles and functions.
- (15) Describe access to key stakeholders and commitment to developing and sustaining good working relationships with them.
- (16) Describe the relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated, or underway with Federal assistance by the applicant.
- (17) Describe the role of the author of this proposal in the implementation of the proposed project.

CRITERION 4: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (10 Points)

- (1) Justify proposed project costs in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits gained. Discussion should refer to the budget information presented on Standard Forms 424 and 424A and the applicant's budget justification.
- (2) Describe the fiscal control and accounting procedures which would be used to ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement and accurate accounting of funds received under this program announcement.
- (3) Show allocation of sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director and the evaluator to attend an annual 3-day grantees' meeting in Washington, D.C., and to provide for the project director and the evaluator to attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first three months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C.. (Attendance at these meetings is a grant requirement.)

ASSURANCES: By signing the SF 424, the organization agrees to comply with the following:

- (1) The applicant will have the project fully functioning within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.
- (2) The applicant will participate if the Children's Bureau chooses to do a national evaluation or a technical assistance contract which relates to this priority area.
- (3) The project director and the evaluator will attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first three months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C. and an annual three-to-five day meeting with the Children's Bureau staff in Washington, D.C.

- (4) All required reports will be submitted in a timely manner, in recommended formats (to be provided), and the final report will also be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program.
- (5) Within 90 days of project end date, the applicant will submit a copy of the final report, the evaluation report, and any program products to the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse, 330 C Street, SW, Washington, DC 20447. This is in addition to the standard requirement that the final program and evaluation report must also be submitted to the Grants Management Specialist and the Federal Project Officer.

PROJECT DURATION: The projects will be awarded for a project period of 60 months. The initial grant award will be for a 12-month budget period. The award of continuation funding beyond each 12-month budget period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of each grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the government.

FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS: The maximum Federal share of the project is \$350,000 per budget period. No application seeking Federal funding exceeding the amount noted will be accepted for review.

MATCHING OR COST SHARING REQUIREMENT: The grantee must provide at least ten percent of the total approved cost of the project. The total approved cost is the sum of the Federal share and the non-Federal share. Therefore, a project requesting \$350,000 per budget period must include a match of at least \$38,889 per budget period. Applicants should provide a letter of commitment verifying the actual amount of the non-Federal share of project costs.

The following example shows how to calculate the required ten percent match amount for a \$350,000 grant:

	\$350,000	(Federal share)
divided by	.90	(100% - 10%)
equals	\$388,889	(total project cost including match)
minus	\$350,000	(federal share)
equals	\$38,889	(required 10% match)

The non-Federal share may be cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. If approved for funding, grantees will be held accountable for the commitment of non-Federal resources and failure to provide the required amount will result in a disallowance of unmatched Federal funds.

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED: It is anticipated that up to eight projects will be funded.

LENGTH OF APPLICATION: The length of the application is limited to 75 pages, including all forms and attachments. Any pages over this number will be removed and will not be reviewed.

APPLICABLE GRANT REGULATIONS: Grants awarded under this program are subject to grant regulations under CFR Part 74 or 92.

CFDA NUMBER: 93.652

POST AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: All required reports must be submitted in a timely manner. Program progress reports must be submitted semi-annually. For example, for a project awarded by September 30, a semi-annual program progress report covering the period October through March and April through September is due for each year of the approved project period. A grantee is allowed 30 days to submit the report following the end of the six-month period. Recommended formats for the reports will be provided. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the project and will be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program. The financial reports (Form 269), both semi-annual and final, are also due on the same schedule as the program progress reports.

2003A.2 Projects to Improve Recruitment of Adoptive Parents in Rural Communities

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: States, local government entities, public or private non-profit licensed child welfare or adoption agencies, adoptive family groups, and non-profit organizations including community and faith-based organizations with experience in working with rural populations and with access to children in foster care. Collaborative efforts and interdisciplinary applications are acceptable, however applications from collaborations must identify a primary applicant responsible for administering the grant.

PURPOSE: To recruit and develop a pool of adoptive families in rural communities and match them with children in foster care awaiting adoption.

NOTE: The Census Bureau's definition of rural will be used to determine eligibility under this priority area. The weblink for this definition is: <http://landview.census.gov/population/censusdata/urdef.txt> In the Census Bureau definition, territory, population, and housing units not classified as urban constitute "rural." The Census Bureau defines "urban" as comprising all territory, population, and housing units in urbanized areas and in places of 2,500 or more persons outside urbanized areas. An urbanized area comprises one or more places ("central place") and the adjacent densely settled surrounding territory ("urban fringe") that together have a minimum of 50,000 persons. The urban fringe generally consists of contiguous territory having a density of at least 1,000 persons per square mile. The weblink contains additional information. The complete criteria are available from the Chief, Geography Division, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The number of children adopted from foster care or with some form of public agency involvement has increased substantially from 31,000 in 1997 to 50,000 in FY 2000. However, as of September 30, 2000, preliminary estimates indicate that 130,000 children in foster care were waiting to be adopted. Of these, the parental rights of 75,000 children had been terminated and the remainder had a goal of adoption. On average, the children were 8 years old and had been in the foster care system continuously for 3 to 4 years. Two-thirds were children of color. The annual number of children freed for adoption is expected to grow as the States aggressively implement the Adoption and Safe Families Act. To meet the permanency needs of these children States need to increase their efforts for finalizing adoptions for them.

Recognizing the unique characteristics and needs of rural communities and the relevance of the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) mission to these communities; the Secretary of HHS, Tommy G. Thompson, issued a charge on July 25, 2001 to all HHS divisions to improve and enhance the provision of health and social services to rural Americans. Five goals were identified by the HHS Rural Task Force and are as follows: (1) improving rural communities' access to quality health and human services, (2) strengthening rural families, (3) strengthening rural communities, and supporting economic development, (4) partnering with States, local and tribal governments to support rural communities, and (5) supporting rural

policy/decision-making as well as ensuring a rural voice in the consultation process for the 65 million people living in rural America.

The Child and Family Services Reviews (CFS) Reviews which were authorized by the 1994 amendments to the Social Security Act are shedding light on the strengths and needs of child welfare practice in rural communities. This priority area would assist rural communities in meeting CFSR expectations for adoption of children in foster care with a special focus on rural recruitment.

NOTE: Activities funded under this priority area are demonstration projects. See Section I for more information on preparing a successful demonstration project application.

REVIEW CRITERIA: The following specific criteria will be used to review and evaluate the applications in this priority area. The applicant should answer each question listed under each criterion. It is strongly recommended that applicants organize their proposals around these criteria, so that reviewers can readily find information that directly addresses each of the specific review criteria. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

CRITERION 1: OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

- (1) Describe how the proposed project would contribute to achieving the goals and objectives of the Adoption Opportunities legislation.
- (2) Explain the vision of the service model you anticipate developing and describe how it compares to the existing system.
- (3) Describe the goals and objectives of the proposed project. (Goals are herein defined as the end products of an effective project and objectives are defined as measurable steps for reaching these goals.)
- (4) Describe the context of the proposed project. Include the geographic location, characteristics of the community (socioeconomic and demographic) and target population (age, race, ethnicity, length of stay in foster care, number of children waiting and legally available for adoption), magnitude and severity of the problems and needs to be addressed, the status of the existing system serving children in foster care and those waiting for adoption (particularly children with special needs), including barriers and gaps in this system.
- (5) Describe the needs of rural adoptive parents for initial and on-going support, including the need for transportation, fatherhood resources, and marriage support for newly adoptive parents to sustain these new families.
- (6) Describe the benefits that clients would derive and estimate the number of clients (children waiting for adoption, rural adoptive parents recruited) to be served. Explain the basis for these estimates.

- (7) Explain how the proposed project would build local capacity to provide services to children waiting for adoption and increase adoptive placement of those in foster care after Federal funding has ceased.
- (8) Describe and summarize the relevant research and best practice literature regarding child welfare, foster care, and adoption. Explain how the proposed program design is evidence-based and how it reflects up-to-date knowledge of this research and best practice literature.
- (9) Describe and summarize current initiatives in the field of foster care and adoptive placements (particularly for children with special needs as described in the introduction to this section) and explain how the proposed approach would build on or differ from these initiatives.
- (10) Describe the linkages between the proposed program's activities and its intended outcomes.
- (11) Describe how the proposed project is innovative and how it will contribute to increased knowledge of the problems, issues, and effective strategies and practices in the field.
- (12) If successfully implemented and evaluated, explain how the proposed project would yield findings or results that would contribute to and promote evidence-based practices.
- (13) Explain how the proposed project's findings or results would be useful to other agencies and organizations in developing services and programs, would benefit national policy and practice, and would identify issues for additional research in the field.
- (14) Describe how the components and strategies of the proposed project would be documented so that the successful elements of the approach could be replicated by other agencies addressing the same or similar problems.
- (15) Explain why the proposed project has potential for implementation in other settings.

CRITERION 2: APPROACH (50 Points)

- (1) Describe the plan of action for implementing the proposed project.
- (2) If the project involves sub-contracts or partnerships with other agencies and organizations, explain the roles of each partner. These roles should be clearly specified.
- (3) Explain why the proposed program design is feasible and appropriate to address the needs of the target population.
- (4) Describe the plan for documenting project activities and results, including the development of a data collection infrastructure that is sufficient to support a methodologically sound and rigorous evaluation.
- (5) Describe the data which would be collected on individuals and families, the types of services provided and used, and the types and nature of needs identified and met. Explain how these data would be collected, and how informed consent would be secured. Describe plans regarding an Institutional Review Board (IRB) review, if applicable.
- (6) Explain how the plan of action would lead to measurable improvements in the number of families recruited as potential adoptive parents and the proportion of children in foster care placed or adopted by rural families during the period of the grant.

- (7) Explain how the proposed project would establish and maintain effective linkages with other appropriate agencies and organizations on the local, State or Federal level serving the target population.
- (8) Describe the specific steps designed to ensure that the proposed project would build local capacity and yield results that would extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance as a part of the agency's ongoing program.
- (9) Describe changes which would be made in staff training, agency policies and requirements in order to respond to the needs of the population of children and adoptive families to be served.
- (10) Describe in detail the specific services which would be provided under the proposed project.
- (11) Explain how the proposed services would bridge gaps in the current service-delivery system, and benefit the recipients and the target community.
- (12) Describe ways in which the proposed services are innovative and explain how they involve the demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.
- (13) Show how the proposed services are comprehensive in scope and how they would address a broad range of the target population's needs, including transportation and fatherhood resources, and marriage support for newly adoptive parents to sustain these new families.
- (14) Explain how the proposed services would involve the collaboration of appropriate partners (external and internal) for maximizing the effectiveness of service delivery.
- (15) If proposing to serve a specific target population in a specific geographic location, explain how the project would deal with non-target population applicants who may respond to the project.
- (16) Describe the plan to ensure a culturally sensitive family preparation process that would prepare prospective adoptive families, taking into consideration family values and cultural norms as well as organizational systems.
- (17) Describe services which would be provided to urban children to assist with their adjustment to a rural community.
- (18) Explain how services would be structured to ensure that fees (services and legal) do not act as a barrier for any family.
- (19) Describe the plan for evaluating achievement of project goals and objectives, customer satisfaction, processes, outcomes, impact, the effectiveness of project strategies and the efficiency of the implementation process. Agencies that do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, comprehensive evaluation of the project are advised to contract with a third-party evaluator specializing in social science or evaluation, or a university or college to conduct the evaluation. If not using internal resources for project evaluation, describe the plan for securing an external evaluator.
- (20) Show how the logic model for this project demonstrates strong links between proposed inputs and activities, and intended short-term and long-term outcomes. (See Section I of this application package for more information on logic models.)

- (21) Describe how the proposed methods of evaluation would include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and would produce quantitative and qualitative outcome data.
- (22) Explain how the proposed methods of evaluation would provide performance feedback and periodic assessment of program progress and how this feedback would be used to make on-going program adjustments.
- (23) Describe the plan for evaluating the innovations used to improve the recruitment of adoptive parents in rural communities, and the successes and failures of these innovations; collecting and analyzing data to determine placement rates and the types of clients served (e.g., waiting children, prospective adoptive families); providing for the collection of data to determine the availability of adoptive families during the program period; and gathering descriptive information on the processes and procedures used in implementing the project.
- (24) Explain why the proposed methods of evaluation are feasible, comprehensive and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and context of the proposed project.
- (25) Show how the proposed evaluation plan would be likely to yield findings or results about effective strategies, and contribute to and promote evaluation research and evidence-based practices that could be used to guide replication or testing in other settings.
- (26) Describe the plan for committing 10-15 percent of the proposed budget to project evaluation. (This evaluation can be conducted using in-house or in-kind resources, or through a contract. Agencies that do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, large-scale evaluation are advised to propose contracting with a third-party evaluator, university or college, specializing in social science evaluation, to conduct the evaluation.)
- (27) Describe the products that would be developed during the proposed project (e.g. questionnaires, interview guides, and other data collection instruments, software designed for the proposed project, Internet applications, web postings, technical reports, journal articles, and a final report describing the target population, issues addressed, project design, implementation, outcomes and the results of the project evaluation) and explain how these products would provide information that supports evidence-based improvements of practices in the field.
- (28) Describe the intended audience (e.g., researchers, policymakers, and practitioners) for product dissemination, explain why this audience is appropriate to the goals of the proposed project and show how the project's products would be useful to each of these audiences.
- (29) Describe the plan for disseminating information on strategies utilized and the outcomes achieved. Describe the mechanisms and forums which would be used to convey the information and support replication by other interested agencies.
- (30) Describe the schedule for developing these products, and explain why the proposed dissemination plan is appropriate in scope and budget.

CRITERION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES (20 Points)

- (1) Describe the management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality.
- (2) Describe factors which could speed or hinder project implementation, and explain how these factors would be managed.
- (3) Describe the roles and responsibilities of the lead agency, the time commitments of the project director, and other key project personnel (including evaluators or consultants), and explain why these roles, responsibilities, and time commitments are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.
- (4) Describe the strategies for ensuring timely staffing and implementation. (Applicants are expected to have the project fully staffed and ready for implementation within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.)
- (5) List the organizations and consultants which will work with the program as sub-contractors and/or partners (if applicable). For each of these, describe the nature of their effort or contribution and describe the plan for managing and coordinating these activities. Include a letter of commitment or Memorandum of Understanding from each sub-contractor describing the role of the sub-contractor, detailing specific tasks to be performed, and expressing commitment to participate in the proposed project. In the event that a proposed partner fails to fulfill their assigned roles and functions, describe the plan for quickly securing a satisfactory replacement.
- (6) Describe the timeline for the project, including the sequence and timing of the major tasks and subtasks, important milestones, reports, and completion dates. Describe factors that may affect project implementation or outcomes and the strategies for the resolution of these difficulties.
- (7) Describe the plan for training project staff as well as staff of cooperating organizations.
- (8) Describe the plan for ensuring compliance with all Departmental regulations and procedures pertaining to confidentiality and careful handling of information on individuals, families and evaluation data, and obtaining informed consent from participants.
- (9) Describe the technical skills, knowledge, and experience which the proposed project director, key project staff, and consultants have with similar projects and with this target population.
- (10) Present evidence that staffing is adequate to successfully carry out the proposed project on time, within budget and with a high degree of quality; including administration, program services, data processing and analysis, evaluation, reporting, and dissemination of findings.
- (11) Include brief resumes of current and proposed staff, as well as position descriptions. (Resumes must indicate the position that the individual will fill, and each position description must specifically describe the job as it relates to the proposed project.)

- (12) Describe experience which the applicant has with similar projects and the target population, and/or in developing and implementing innovative programs or service-delivery systems in the field of child welfare, foster care, and adoption.
- (13) Describe organizational resources which the applicant commits to the proposed project, including administration, program operations, management information systems, data processing and analysis, evaluation, reporting, and dissemination of findings.
- (14) Describe experience which sub-contractors and partnering organizations have with similar projects and the target population and explain how they are otherwise qualified to fulfill their assigned roles and functions.
- (15) Describe access to key stakeholders and commitment to developing and sustaining good working relationships with them.
- (16) Describe the relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated or underway with Federal assistance by the applicant.
- (17) Describe the role of the author of this proposal in the implementation of the proposed project.

CRITERION 4: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (10 Points)

- (1) Justify proposed project costs in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits gained. Discussion should refer to the budget information presented on Standard Forms 424 and 424A and the applicant's budget justification.
- (2) Describe the fiscal control and accounting procedures which would be used to ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement, and accurate accounting of funds received under this program announcement.
- (3) Show allocation of sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director and the evaluator to attend an annual 3-day grantees' meeting in Washington, D.C., and to provide for the project director and the evaluator to attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first three months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C.. (Attendance at these meetings is a grant requirement.)

ASSURANCES: By signing the SF 424, the organization agrees to comply with the following:

- (1) The applicant will have the project fully functioning within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.
- (2) The applicant will participate if the Children's Bureau chooses to do a national evaluation or a technical assistance contract which relates to this priority area.
- (3) The project director and the evaluator will attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first three months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C. and an annual three to five day meeting with the Children's Bureau staff in Washington, D.C.
- (4) All required reports will be submitted in a timely manner, in recommended formats (to be provided), and the final report will also be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program.

- (5) Within 90 days of project end date, the applicant will submit a copy of the final report, the evaluation report, and any program products to the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse, 330 C Street, SW, Washington, DC 20447. This is in addition to the standard requirement that the final program and evaluation report must also be submitted to the Grants Management Specialist and the Federal Project Officer.

PROJECT DURATION: The projects will be awarded for a project period of 60 months. The initial grant award will be for a 12-month budget period. The award of continuation funding beyond each 12-month budget period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of each grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the government.

FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS: The maximum Federal share of the project is \$400,000 per budget period. No application seeking Federal funding exceeding the amount noted will be accepted for review.

MATCHING OR COST SHARING REQUIREMENT: The grantee must provide at least 10 percent of the total approved cost of the project. The total approved cost is the sum of the Federal share and the non-Federal share. Therefore, a project requesting \$400,000 per budget period must include a match of at least \$ 44,444 per budget period. Applicants should provide a letter of commitment verifying the actual amount of the non-Federal share of project costs.

The following example shows how to calculate the required 10 percent match amount for a \$400,000 grant:

	\$400,000	(Federal share)
divided by	.90	(100% - 10%)
equals	\$444,444	(total project cost including match
minus	\$400,000	(federal share)
equals	\$44,444	(required 10% match)

The non-Federal share may be cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. If approved for funding, grantees will be held accountable for the commitment of non-Federal resources and failure to provide the required amount will result in a disallowance of unmatched Federal funds.

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED: It is anticipated that up to eight projects will be funded.

LENGTH OF APPLICATION: The length of the application is limited to 75 pages, including all forms and attachments. Any pages over this number will be removed and will not be reviewed.

APPLICABLE GRANT REGULATIONS: Grants awarded under this program are subject to grant regulations under CFR Part 74 or 92.

CFDA NUMBER: 93.652

POST AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: All required reports must be submitted in a timely manner. Program progress reports must be submitted semi-annually. For example, for a project awarded by September 30, a semi-annual program progress report covering the period October through March and April through September is due for each year of the approved project period. A grantee is allowed 30 days to submit the report following the end of the six-month period. Recommended formats for the reports will be provided. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the project and will be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program. The financial reports (Form 269), both semi-annual and final, are also due on the same schedule as the program progress reports.

2003A.3 Developing a National Network of Adoption Advocacy Programs

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: States, local government entities, public or private non-profit licensed child welfare or adoption agencies, universities (including university-affiliated programs) or adoptive family groups and community based organizations and non-profit organizations including community and faith-based organizations with adoption expertise. Eligible applicants must have the capacity to operate and support a national network as well as assist in the development and support of local adoption advocacy programs that are modeled on the One Church, One Child program. Collaborative efforts and interdisciplinary applications are acceptable, however applications from collaborations must identify a primary applicant responsible for administering the grant.

PURPOSE: To operate a national network of adoption advocacy programs that are modeled on the One Church, One Child program and that will work in close cooperation with State foster care and adoption programs. The grantee will implement a project that will function on three levels: (1) operate a national network, including collaboration and capacity building for programs in the network; (2) identify diverse communities across the country needing programs that promote adoption; and (3) create and support programs in these locations which recruit and develop a pool of adoptive families, match them with children in foster care awaiting adoption, and provide post-adoption support to these families (as in the One Church, One Child model).

NOTE: While the originating program, see below, was developed in churches, this competition would be open to all eligible applicants as defined above.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The number of children adopted from foster care or with some form of public agency involvement has increased substantially from 31,000 in 1997 to 50,000 in FY 2000. However, as of September 30, 2000, preliminary estimates indicate that 130,000 children in foster care were waiting to be adopted. Of these, the parental rights of 75,000 children had been terminated and the remainder had a goal of adoption. On average the children were 8 years old and had been in the foster care system continuously for 3 to 4 years. Two-thirds were children of color. The annual number of children freed for adoption is expected to grow as the States aggressively implement the Adoption and Safe Families Act. To meet the permanency needs of these children States will need to increase their efforts for finalizing adoptions for them.

One Church, One Child was founded in Chicago, Illinois in 1980 by the Reverend George Clements, a Roman Catholic priest. It was an organized method for reaching out to the black community through churches to explain the need for families for children waiting to be adopted. A person known as a One Church, One Child presenter went into the churches to explain the need for adoptive families. The presenter spoke on behalf of Illinois One Church, One Child and served as a liaison between the State child welfare system and the participating churches represented by the ecumenical One Church, One Child board of clergy. This model is credited with reducing the number of black children waiting for adoption in the State of Illinois from a high of 1,000 children in 1980 to less than 150 children in 1987.

With Federal and private funding, the Illinois One Church, One Child model was replicated in 24 States, and several national conferences were held for One Church, One Child programs. Today, One Church One Child programs operate in approximately 30 States. This priority area will provide the opportunity to test the model and appropriate variations of the model's applicability and efficacy for meeting the goals of the Adoption Opportunity legislation within a wider variety of cultural and faith-based community sites across the country.

The activities to be supported under this priority area include:

- (1) operating a national network of adoption advocacy programs that are modeled on the One Church, One Child program
- (2) supporting the preparation and dissemination of written materials for network and local program development and leadership
- (3) identifying geographic areas, cultural and faith-based communities that are lacking programs that support adoption and targeting those areas for development activities
- (4) increasing the number of organizations involved in programs that support adoption and encouraging the use of the One Church, One Child program model as part of a statewide coordinated adoption strategy by strengthening the relationships between adoption promotion groups and State Child Welfare agencies
- (5) increasing the participation of members of racial and ethnic minorities, and under-served populations
- (6) conducting public awareness and outreach activities to encourage support for and participation in adoption advocacy programs including One Church, One Child programs

NOTE: This program announcement seeks a grantee to enter into a Cooperative Agreement with the Children's Bureau to fulfill the purposes of this grant. A Cooperative Agreement is Federal Assistance in which substantial Federal involvement is anticipated. Under a Cooperative Agreement the respective responsibilities of Federal staff and the awardee are negotiated prior to award. The awardee will be required to submit to the Children's Bureau for review and approval prior to finalization and dissemination: work plans, topics to be covered in technical assistance, plans for or actual resource lists, syntheses, summaries or literature reviews to be disseminated within the networks; and draft reports, training agendas, and other materials as appropriate.

RESOURCES: *OCOC: Implementing a Minority Recruitment Program* published by the IL DCFS in 1987 is a 37 page handbook which "identifies the basic principle of the (One Church, One Child) program and some of the personal, social and cultural dynamics that give the principle its power. It provides the rationale, suggests important components and key people for the program." A copy of this handbook can be obtained by contacting the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, 330 C Street, SW, Washington, DC 20447; phone (800) 394-3366; fax (703) 385-3206; e-mail nccanch@calib.com.

NOTE: Activities funded under this priority area are demonstration projects. See Section I for more information on preparing a successful demonstration project application.

REVIEW CRITERIA: The following specific criteria will be used to review and evaluate the applications in this priority area. The applicant should answer each question listed under each criterion. It is strongly recommended that applicants organize their proposals around these criteria, so that reviewers can readily find information that directly addresses each of the specific review criteria. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

CRITERION 1: OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

- (1) Describe how the proposed project would contribute to achieving the goals and objectives of the Adoption Opportunities legislation.
- (2) Describe the goals and objectives of the One Church, One Child model.
- (3) Explain the need for a national network of adoption advocacy programs modeled after the One Church, One Child program.
- (4) Describe the current status of One Church, One Child programs. Explain how the approach being proposed will build on these and similar programs. Explain what the proposed Network would offer these sites.
- (5) Describe the goals and objectives of the proposed project, including the network that would be created, the number of adoption advocacy programs that would be developed and enhanced and the kind and amount of technical assistance that would be provided. (Goals are herein defined as the end products of an effective project and objectives are defined as measurable steps for reaching these goals.)
- (6) Describe the context of the proposed project, including the geographic location, characteristics of the communities (socioeconomic and demographic) and target populations (age, race, ethnicity, length of stay in foster care, number of children waiting and legally available for adoption), magnitude and severity of the problems and needs to be addressed, the status of the existing system serving children in foster care and those waiting for adoption (particularly children with special needs), including barriers and gaps in this system.
- (7) Describe the needs of adoptive parents for initial and on-going support, including the need for marriage support for newly adoptive parents to sustain these new families.
- (8) Describe the benefits that new and existing adoption promotion programs will derive from the proposed national network project and estimate the anticipated number of clients (children in foster care waiting for adoption, adoptive parents recruited, families receiving post adoption services) to be served by these new and expanded programs. Explain the basis for these estimates.
- (9) Explain how the proposed project would build local capacity to provide services to children waiting for adoption, increase adoptive placement of those in foster care and provide these types of adoption advocacy services after Federal funding has ceased.

- (10) Describe and summarize the relevant research and best practices literature regarding One Church, One Child, child welfare, foster care and adoption. Explain how the proposed program design is evidence-based and how it reflects up-to-date knowledge of this research and best practice literature.
- (11) Describe and summarize current initiatives in the field of foster care and adoptive placements (particularly for children with special needs as described in the introduction to this section) and explain how the proposed approach would build on or differ from these initiatives.
- (12) Describe the linkages between the proposed program's activities and its intended outcomes.
- (13) Describe how the proposed project is innovative and how it will contribute to increased knowledge of the problems, issues, and effective strategies and practices in the field.
- (14) If successfully implemented and evaluated, explain how the proposed project would yield findings or results that would contribute to and promote evidence-based practices.
- (15) Explain how the proposed project's findings or results would be useful to other agencies and organizations in developing services and programs, would benefit national policy and practice, and would identify issues for additional research in the field.
- (16) Describe how the components and strategies of the proposed project would be documented so that the successful elements of the approach could be replicated by other agencies addressing the same or similar problems.

CRITERION 2: APPROACH (50 Points)

- (1) Describe the conceptual framework that will be used in establishing and maintaining a national network of adoption promotion programs which are like the One Church, One Child model or improvements on that model.
- (2) Describe the plan of action for implementing the proposed project.
- (3) Describe the key elements of the One Church, One Child model, and explain how the proposed project would ensure their replication. Describe the proposed strategies for implementing these key elements at the network and individual site levels.
- (4) Describe the problems and issues related to the establishment and maintenance of this national network of adoption promotion programs and to the establishment and support of the new local programs. Explain how these problems and issues would be addressed by the proposed project.
- (5) Describe the proposed strategy for utilizing the first year as a period for planning.
- (6) Describe the plan for soliciting and reviewing proposals, and funding a limited number of mini-grants to entities that wish to start new adoption promotion programs like the One Church, One Child programs. Explain how the proposed project would ensure that these new programs would serve a variety of cultural and faith-based communities across the country, and be responsive to the goals of the Adoption Opportunities legislation.
- (7) Describe the strategies for providing (or brokering the provision of) training and technical assistance for establishing new programs, for supporting existing programs

that support adoption including existing One Church, One Child programs, and for creating a network within which programs may provide mutual support to one another. Describe the strategy for prioritizing technical assistance requests and maximizing available financial resources, including techniques such as cost-sharing arrangements and the use of electronic technologies.

- (8) Describe the plan for identifying and evaluating innovative and exemplary practices in new and existing programs that would be suitable for replication and for training and technical assistance to support the transfer of those practices to other programs.
- (9) If the project involves sub-contracts or partnerships with other agencies and organizations, explain the roles of each partner. These roles should be clearly specified.
- (10) Describe ways in which the proposed program design is evidence-based and explain how it reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practices on child welfare, foster care and adoption.
- (11) Explain why the proposed program design is feasible and appropriate to address the needs of the target population.
- (12) Describe the plan for documenting project activities and results, including the development of a data collection infrastructure that is sufficient to support a methodologically sound and rigorous evaluation.
- (13) Describe the data which would be collected by local programs on individuals and families, the types of services provided and used, and the types and nature of needs identified and met. Explain how these data would be collected, and how informed consent would be secured. Describe plans regarding an Institutional Review Board (IRB) review, if applicable.
- (14) Explain how the plan of action would lead to measurable improvements in the proportion of placement of children in foster care with adoptive families during the period of the grant.
- (15) Explain how the proposed project would establish and maintain effective linkages with other appropriate agencies and organizations on the local, State, or Federal level serving the target population.
- (16) Describe the specific steps designed to ensure that the proposed project would build local capacity and yield results that would extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance as a part of the agency's ongoing program.
- (17) Describe the changes which would be made in staff training, agency policies and requirements in order to respond to the needs of the population of children and adoptive families to be served.
- (18) Describe in detail the specific services which would be provided under the proposed project, including the network and program development and support services to be provided by the applicant, and the direct services to be provided by One Church, One Child and other similar adoption advocacy and promotion programs, with the support of the applicant.
- (19) Explain how the proposed services would bridge gaps in the current service-delivery system, and benefit the recipients and the target community.

- (20) Describe ways in which the proposed services are innovative and explain how they involve the demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.
- (21) Show how the proposed services are comprehensive in scope and how they would address a broad range of the target population's needs, including marriage support for newly adoptive parents to sustain these new families.
- (22) Explain how the proposed services would involve the collaboration of appropriate partners (external and internal) for maximizing the effectiveness of service delivery.
- (23) If proposing to serve a specific target population in a specific geographic location, explain how the project would deal with non-target population applicants who may respond to the project.
- (24) Describe the plan to ensure a culturally sensitive family preparation process that would prepare prospective adoptive families, taking into consideration family values and cultural norms as well as organizational systems.
- (25) Describe the services which would be provided to adopted children to assist with their adjustment to their new family and community.
- (26) Explain how services would be structured to ensure that fees (services and legal) do not act as a barrier for any family.
- (27) Describe the plan for evaluating achievement of project goals and objectives, client satisfaction, processes, outcomes, impact, the effectiveness of project strategies and the efficiency of the implementation process. Applicants should propose a plan for directly evaluating the national network goals and objectives related to creating new projects and assisting existing projects. In this context, client satisfaction refers to national network members, and new and existing adoption promotion programs including One Church, One Child programs. Applicants should also propose a plan for helping local programs evaluate their customer satisfaction, processes, and outcomes. Agencies that do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, comprehensive evaluation of the project are advised to contract with a third-party evaluator specializing in social science or evaluation, or a university or college to conduct the evaluation. If not using internal resources for project evaluation, describe the plan for securing an external evaluator.
- (28) Show how the logic model for this project demonstrates strong links between proposed inputs and activities, and intended short-term and long-term outcomes. (See Section I of this application package for more information on logic models.)
- (29) Describe how the proposed methods of evaluation would include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and would produce quantitative and qualitative outcome data.
- (30) Explain how the proposed methods of evaluation would provide performance feedback and periodic assessment of program progress and how this feedback would be used to make on-going program adjustments.
- (31) Describe the plan for evaluating the innovations used to improve the adoption of children in foster care, and the successes and failures of these innovations; collecting and analyzing data to determine placement rates and the types of clients served (e.g.,

waiting children, prospective adoptive families); providing for the collection of data to determine the availability of adoptive families during the program period; and gathering descriptive information on the processes and procedures used in implementing the project.

- (32) Explain why the proposed methods of evaluation are feasible, comprehensive, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and context of the proposed project.
- (33) Show how the proposed evaluation plan would be likely to yield findings or results about effective strategies, and contribute to and promote evaluation research and evidence-based practices that could be used to guide replication or testing in other settings.
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- (35) Describe the products that would be developed during the proposed project (e.g. questionnaires, interview guides, and other data collection instruments, software designed for the proposed project, Internet applications, web postings, technical reports, journal articles, and a final report describing the target population, issues addressed, project design, implementation, outcomes and the results of the project evaluation) and explain how these products would provide information that supports evidence-based improvements of practices in the field.
- (36) Describe the intended audience (e.g., researchers, policymakers, and practitioners) for product dissemination, explain why this audience is appropriate to the goals of the proposed project and show how the project's products would be useful to each of these audiences.
- (37) Describe the plan for disseminating information on strategies utilized and the outcomes achieved. Describe the mechanisms and forums which would be used to convey the information and support replication by other interested agencies.
- (38) Describe the schedule for developing these products, and explain why the proposed dissemination plan is appropriate in scope and budget.

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- (1) Describe the management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality.
- (2) Describe factors which could speed or hinder project implementation, and explain how these factors would be managed.
- (3) Describe the roles and responsibilities of the lead agency, the time commitments of the project director and other key project personnel (including evaluators or consultants), and explain why these roles, responsibilities, and time commitments are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.
- (4) Describe the strategies for ensuring timely staffing and implementation. (Applicants are expected to have the project fully staffed and ready for implementation within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.)
- (5) List the organizations and consultants which would work with the proposed program as sub-contractors and/or partners (if applicable). For each of these, describe the nature of their effort or contribution and describe the plan for managing and coordinating these activities. Include a letter of commitment or Memorandum of Understanding from each sub-contractor describing the role of the sub-contractor, detailing specific tasks to be performed, and expressing commitment to participate in the proposed project. In the event that a proposed partner fails to fulfill their assigned roles and functions, describe the plan for quickly securing a satisfactory replacement.
- (6) Describe the timeline for the project, including the sequence and timing of the major tasks and subtasks, important milestones, reports, and completion dates. Describe factors that may affect project implementation or outcomes and the strategies for the resolution of these difficulties.
- (7) Describe the plan for training project staff as well as staff of cooperating organizations.
- (8) Describe the plan for ensuring compliance with all Departmental regulations and procedures pertaining to confidentiality and careful handling of information on individuals, families and evaluation data, and obtaining informed consent from participants.
- (9) Describe the relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated, or underway with Federal assistance by the applicant.
- (10) Describe the technical skills, knowledge, and experience which the proposed project director, key project staff, and consultants have with similar projects and with this target population.
- (11) Describe the experience the staff and organization has in working with child welfare populations. Brief resumes of current and proposed staff, as well as job descriptions, should be included. Resumes must indicate what position the individual will fill and position descriptions must specifically describe the job as it relates to the proposed project. List organizations and consultants who will work on the program along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution. Provide information on

plans for training project staff as well as staff of cooperating organizations and individuals.

- (12) Describe experience which the applicant has with similar projects and the target population, and/or in developing and implementing innovative programs or service-delivery systems in the field of child welfare, foster care, and adoption.
- (13) Describe organizational resources which the applicant commits to the proposed project, including administration, program operations, management information systems, data processing and analysis, evaluation, reporting and dissemination of findings.
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- (16) Describe the role of the author of this proposal in the implementation of the proposed project.

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- (5) Within 90 days of project end date, the applicant will submit a copy of the final report, the evaluation report, and any program products to the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse, 330 C Street, SW, Washington, DC 20447. This is in addition to the standard requirement that the final program and evaluation report must also be submitted to the Grants Management Specialist and the Federal Project Officer.

PROJECT DURATION: The project will be awarded for a project period of 60 months. The initial grant award will be for a 12-month budget period. The award of continuation funding beyond each 12-month budget period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the government.

FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS: The maximum Federal share of the project is \$250,000 for the first budget period and \$500,000 for each of the subsequent budget periods. No application seeking Federal funding exceeding the amount noted will be accepted for review.

MATCHING OR COST SHARING REQUIREMENT: The grantee must provide at least ten percent of the total approved cost of the project. The total approved cost is the sum of the Federal share and the non-Federal share. Therefore, a project requesting \$250,000 for year one and \$500,000 per budget period for years two through five must include a match of at least \$27,778 in year one and \$55,556 per budget period for years two through five. Applicants should provide a letter of commitment verifying the actual amount of the non-Federal share of project costs.

The following example shows how to calculate the required 10 percent match amount for a \$250,000 grant and a \$500,000 grant:

	\$250,000	(Federal share)
divided by	.90	(100% - 10%)
equals	\$277,777	(total project cost including match)
minus	\$250,000	(federal share)
equals	\$27,778	(required 10% match)

	\$500,000	(Federal share)
divided by	.90	(100% - 10%)
equals	\$555,556	(total project cost including match)
minus	\$500,000	(federal share)
equals	\$55,556	(required 10% match)

The non-Federal share may be cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. If approved for funding, grantees will be held accountable for the commitment of non-Federal resources and failure to provide the required amount will result in a disallowance of unmatched Federal funds.

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED: It is anticipated that one project will be funded.

LENGTH OF APPLICATION: The length of the application is limited to 75 pages, including all forms and attachments. Any pages over this number will be removed and will not be reviewed.

APPLICABLE GRANT REGULATIONS: Grants awarded under this program are subject to grant regulations under CFR Part 74 or 92.

CFDA NUMBER: 93.652

POST AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: All required reports must be submitted in a timely manner. Program progress reports must be submitted semi-annually. For example, for a project awarded by September 30, a semi-annual program progress report covering the period October through March and April through September is due for each year of the approved project period. A grantee is allowed 30 days to submit the report following the end of the six-month period. Recommended formats for the reports will be provided. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the project and will be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program. The financial reports (Form 269), both semi-annual and final, are also due on the same schedule as the program progress reports.

2003A.4 Administration of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA)

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Any state, local, public and private nonprofit agency or organization, including community and faith based organizations, or institution of higher learning with demonstrated expertise in the field of child welfare.

PURPOSE: To administer activities, develop strategies and protocols, and encourage State participation in the implementation of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA); to protect the interests of special needs children receiving adoption assistance when adoptive families relocate to another State; to operate a membership organization of States who are members of the Compact; to provide public awareness, training, and support to adoptive parents concerning the availability of Title IV-E adoption assistance; to develop issue papers and provide answers to questions about issues of critical concern to member States; to provide technical and promotional services to member and non-member States; to perform data collection, educational, technical and promotional services; and to increase State membership in the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, Section 475, indicates that adoption assistance agreements “shall contain provisions for the protection (under an interstate compact approved by the Secretary...) of the interests of the child in cases where the adoptive parents and child move to another State while the agreement is effective.” Financial support for ICAMA through a grant funded by the Department has been provided since September 1986.

The Compact monitors State reimbursement of non-recurring expenses for the adoption of children with special needs; establishes and maintains guarantees and workable procedures for interstate cooperation and interstate payments to assist with the necessary costs of adoption assistance, the procurement of services, and the provision of medical assistance; strengthens protections for the interests of children with special needs; and provides substantive assurances and operating procedures that will promote the delivery of medical and other services to children on an interstate basis through programs of adoption assistance established by the laws of the States which are parties to the Compact.

When the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997 (Public Law 105-89) was enacted, it established that the national goals for the provision of services to children in the child welfare system are safety, permanency, and well-being; it also emphasized the importance of ICAMA in achieving the interjurisdictional provisions included in the new law. Continued funding for the Compact will be provided to enhance the safety, permanency, and well-being of children receiving adoption assistance, as mandated by ASFA. Additionally, these activities will enhance the Department’s AdoptUSKids initiative, and efforts to increase the number of adoptions from the public child welfare system. This request for applications seeks a grantee to enter into a

cooperative agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services to administer the Compact.

NOTE: This program announcement seeks a grantee to enter into a Cooperative Agreement with the Children's Bureau to fulfill the purposes of this grant. A Cooperative Agreement is Federal Assistance in which substantial Federal involvement is anticipated. Under a Cooperative Agreement the respective responsibilities of Federal staff and the awardee are negotiated prior to award. The awardee will be required to submit to the Children's Bureau for review and approval prior to finalization and dissemination: work plans, topics to be covered in technical assistance, plans for or actual resource lists, syntheses, summaries or literature reviews to be disseminated within the network; and draft reports, training agendas, newsletters, and other materials as appropriate.

Because this will be awarded as a Cooperative Agreement, the Bureau has identified the following goals and objectives:

- (1) Establishing relationships with State child welfare agencies nationwide in order to mediate interstate disputes;
- (2) Collecting and compiling data on non-recurring adoption costs, the number of children receiving both Title IV-E and State-funded adoption assistance, the interstate movement of children receiving Title IV-E adoption assistance, medical coverage for children receiving State-funded adoption assistance;
- (3) Conducting an annual meeting and other meetings, as necessary, for the purpose of sharing information with the membership as well as the broader adoption community, to update the participants on current Federal laws and policies relevant to the adoption of children from the foster care system;
- (4) Developing a quarterly newsletter for Compact members and interested individuals and organizations;
- (5) Building capacity for appropriate computerization and automation for tracking interstate requests from initiation to completion, to report to Compact members on the timeliness and effectiveness of these actions, and to prepare an annual report on Compact performance;
- (6) Providing public awareness, training, and support to adoptive parents concerning the availability of Title IV-E adoption assistance.

REVIEW CRITERIA: The following specific criteria will be used to review and evaluate the applications in this priority area. The applicant should respond to each element listed under each criterion. It is strongly recommended that applicants organize their proposals around these criteria, so that reviewers can readily find information that directly addresses each of the specific review criteria. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

CRITERION 1: OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

- (1) In addition to the goals and objectives listed in the Background Information of this priority area, describe other goals and objectives which you have identified and explain how their implementation would fulfill the purposes of the applicable legislation identified above.
- (2) Describe your understanding of the purpose of the interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA) as it relates to adoption, Title IV-E Adoption Assistance programs, and other Federal programs and explain how the proposed project would contribute to the achievement of that purpose.
- (3) Describe the expected interim and final results and benefits of the proposed activities and describe the criteria which would be used to evaluate the results and success of the proposed project. Provide detailed information.

CRITERION 2: APPROACH (50 Points)

- (1) Describe the plan for working with HHS and the States to achieve the goals of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, to provide technical assistance to help States eliminate geographic barriers to adoptive placements, and to provide support to adoptive parents concerning the availability of Title IV-E adoption assistance.
- (2) Describe the plan for achieving the goals and objectives of this project.
- (3) Describe the products which would be developed during the proposed project (e.g. questionnaires, interview guides and other data collection instruments, software designed for the proposed project, Internet applications, web postings, technical reports, journal articles, and a final report describing the target population, issues addressed, project design, implementation, outcomes and the results of the project evaluation) and explain how these products would provide information that supports evidence-based improvements of practices in the field.
- (4) Explain how the achievement of project goals and objectives would be evaluated. Agencies that do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, comprehensive evaluation of the project are advised to contract with a third-party evaluator specializing in social science or evaluation, or a university or college to conduct the evaluation. If not using internal resources for project evaluation, describe the plan for securing an external evaluator.
- (5) Describe the strategy for coordinating with the Interstate Compact on Placement of Children (ICPC) which has responsibility for foster care and adoptive placements across State Lines and to facilitate this coordination through automation.

CRITERION 3: ORGANIZATION PROFILES (20 Points)

- (1) Describe the knowledge and ability which your organization possesses to administer the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance in accordance with sections 473 and 475 of the Social Security Act, including expertise in developing by-laws or regulations, as necessary, for governing the ICAMA.
- (2) Describe the experience of your staff and organization in working with child welfare populations. Brief resumes of current and proposed staff, as well as job descriptions, should be included. Resumes must indicate what position the individual will fill and position descriptions must specifically describe the job as it relates to the proposed project. List organizations and consultants who will work on the program along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution. Provide information on plans for training project staff as well as staff of cooperating organizations and individuals.
- (3) Describe the management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality. Describe and demonstrate the ability of the organization to effectively manage the project.
- (4) Describe the relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated, or underway with Federal assistance by the applicant.
- (5) Describe the role of the author of this proposal in the implementation of the proposed project.

CRITERION 4: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (10 Points)

- (1) Justify project costs in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits gained. Discussion should refer to the budget information presented on Standard Forms 424 and 424A and the applicant's budget justification.
- (2) Describe the fiscal control and accounting procedures which would be used to ensure prudent use, proper disbursement and accurate accounting of funds received under this program announcement.
- (3) Show that funds are budgeted for at least three meetings per year including an annual briefing for the Associate Commissioner, presenting the Annual Report on the Compact.

ASSURANCES: By signing the SF 424, the organization agrees to comply with the following:

- (1) The applicant will have the project fully functioning within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.
- (2) The applicant will participate if the Children's Bureau chooses to do a national evaluation or a technical assistance contract which relates to this priority area.
- (3) The project director or a key staff member will attend at least three meetings per year and present an annual briefing for the Associate Commissioner presenting the Annual Report on the Compact in Washington, D.C.

- (4) All required reports will be submitted in a timely manner, in recommended formats (to be provided), and the final report will also be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program.

PROJECT DURATION: The length of the project period for the grant may not exceed 60 months. The initial grant award will be for a 12-month budget period. The award of continuation funding beyond each 12-month budget period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of each grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the government.

FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS: The grant amount will not exceed \$200,000 per budget period. No application seeking Federal funding exceeding the amount noted will be accepted for review.

MATCHING OR COST SHARING REQUIREMENT: The grantee must provide at least ten percent of the total approved cost of the project. The total approved cost is the sum of the Federal share and the non-Federal share. Therefore, a project requesting \$200,000 per budget period must include a match of at least \$22,222 per budget period. Applicants should provide a letter of commitment verifying the actual amount of the non-Federal share of project costs.

The following example shows how to calculate the required 10% match amount for a \$200,000 grant:

	\$200,000	(Federal share)
divided by	.90	(100% - 10%)
equals	\$222,222	(total project cost including match)
minus	\$200,000	(federal share)
equals	\$22,222	(required 10% match)

The non-Federal share may be cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. If approved for funding, grantees will be held accountable for the commitment of non-Federal resources and failure to provide the required amount will result in a disallowance of unmatched Federal funds.

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED: It is anticipated that one project will be funded.

LENGTH OF APPLICATION: The length of the proposal is limited to 50 pages, including all forms and attachments. Any pages over this number will be removed and will not be reviewed.

APPLICABLE GRANT REGULATIONS: Grants awarded under this program are subject to grant regulations under CFR Part 74 or 92.

CFDA NUMBER: 93.652

POST AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: All required reports must be submitted in a timely manner. Program progress reports must be submitted semi-annually. For example, for a project awarded by September 30, a semi-annual program progress report covering the period October through March and April through September is due for each year of the approved project period. A grantee is allowed 30 days to submit the report following the end of the six-month period. Recommended formats for the reports will be provided. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the project and will be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program. The financial reports (Form 269), both semi-annual and final, are also due on the same schedule as the program progress reports.

2003B: Child Abuse and Neglect Discretionary Activities

Child abuse and neglect is a problem that impacts every community. Based on data collected through the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS), child protective service agencies received about three million referrals of possible maltreatment in 2000. Of these, approximately 879,000 cases were substantiated after investigation. Almost two-thirds (62 percent) of these children suffered neglect; 19 percent were physically abused; 10 percent were sexually abused and 8 percent were psychologically maltreated. The rate of child victims per 1,000 children in the population has been decreasing steadily since 1993 when there were 15.3 victims per 1,000 children. In 2000, consistent with previous years, 84 percent of victims were abused by a parent or parents. Mothers acting alone were responsible for 47 percent of the neglect and 32 percent of the physical abuse. Non-relatives, fathers acting alone, and other relatives were responsible for 29 percent, 22 percent and 19 percent, respectively, of the sexual abuse. Approximately 1,200 children died of abuse or neglect, a rate of 1.71 children per 100,000 children in the population.

Since 1974, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) [USC 5105] has funded discretionary research, evaluation, and assistance activities designed to provide information to better protect children from abuse or neglect and to improve the well-being of abused or neglected children. These discretionary activities support research on the causes, prevention, and treatment of child abuse and neglect; demonstration programs to identify the best means of preventing maltreatment and treating troubled families; and the development and implementation of training programs.

2003B.1 Fellowships for University-Based Doctoral Candidates and Faculty for Investigator-Initiated Research in Child Abuse and Neglect

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Public or private non-profit institutions of higher learning on behalf of qualified doctoral candidates in human service disciplines enrolled in the institution and faculty employed by the institution. To be eligible to administer such a grant, the institution must be fully accredited by one of the regional institutional accrediting commissions recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and/or the Council on Post-Secondary Accreditation. While an individual is considered to be the beneficiary of the grant support, awards will be made only to eligible institutions on behalf of their qualified candidates.

PURPOSE: To provide support for doctoral candidates in human services disciplines (such as social science, human development, community and family development, special education, early childhood education, child studies, minority studies, psychology, social work, family studies, sociology, child development, medicine, nursing, anthropology, economics, political science, public health, public administration, or criminology), who show promise and demonstrate a serious interest in and commitment to the study of child maltreatment, as well as for faculty who will conduct research on critical issues in child abuse prevention, assessment identification, and treatment. These fellowships serve to help cultivate the academic infrastructure, support the growth of university-based research capacities in the field of child abuse and neglect, and encourage doctoral-level students and faculty to pursue careers in child abuse and neglect research.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The research community has highlighted the need to draw new researchers into the field of child abuse and neglect for many years (*Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect*, Washington DC: National Academy of Science Press, 1993). During FY's 1991, 1992, 1994, 1996 and 2000 a total of 35 graduate research fellowships were funded for doctoral candidates to complete dissertations addressing critical issues in child abuse and neglect. This activity proved rewarding for the Children's Bureau and garnered the support of the field.

The Children's Bureau proposes to award funds for fellowships in blocks to eligible institutions. Each block must consist of at least one faculty member and at least two or up to four students. The students and faculty member may pursue their own individual research or work on coordinated (new or on-going) projects on child abuse and neglect; the topics need not be related to one another, although they may be. In addition to submitting all the required reports to the Children's Bureau, publications and presentations are encouraged. Students' work should lead to dissertations and publications.

Examples of topics for these fellowships include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Studies focusing on over-represented and/or under-served populations in child welfare and child protective services,

- Co-occurrence of child maltreatment and substance abuse and/or domestic violence, mental illness, and social service system responses to co-occurrence in terms of assessment, intervention, treatment and resources or criminal justice system responses,
- TANF and child welfare linkages,
- Secondary analyses of existing databases,
- Measurement development studies, including but not limited to pilot tests of measurement tools, studies of the psychometric properties of existing child abuse and neglect, norming or validation studies for new samples on existing instruments,
- The relationship between criminal court findings and characteristics of substantiated cases,
- The incidence and prevalence of physical and sexual abuse and emotional neglect in substitute care,
- The incidence and outcomes of abuse allegations reported within the context of divorce, custody, or other family court proceedings,
- Research on new medical screening, diagnostic, or interview protocols, and treatment techniques,
- Assessment in CPS response,
- Parenting and marriage,
- Prevention of child maltreatment.

If appropriate, applicants are encouraged to collect data in partnership with one or more agencies and/or organizations in local jurisdictions (e.g., child protective services, child welfare agencies, juvenile, criminal and family courts, substitute care settings, community-based substance abuse treatment centers, service providing organizations, family violence intervention programs, community based family resource and support programs) and to provide informative, management-usable data analysis to the cooperating agency. Some topics may be appropriate for study in teaching hospital settings with multi-disciplinary child protection teams.

For secondary analysis of existing data sets, applicants are encouraged to work with datasets collected through ACF funded projects such as the National Incidence Study (NIS); the National Study of Protective, Preventive and Reunification Services Delivered to Children and their Families; National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-being (NSCAW); Head Start data; other field generated data on child maltreatment; or data stored at the National Data Archives on Child Abuse and Neglect <http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu>.

The Children's Bureau is committed to the process of secondary data analysis for the purpose of verification and extension of research findings. To that end, the applicant(s) must agree to archive the study data with the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect within two years of the termination of the Federal funding for the project. The applicant's Institutional Review Board and the research participants should be made aware that the data from the project will be archived and made available to other researchers after personal identifiers have been removed from the data. Archiving will involve providing individual respondent data in electronic form and the accompanying documentation, including the codebook, the final report, and copies of the research instruments, as appropriate. A manual describing the guidelines of the

Archive, 'Depositing Data with the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect: A Handbook for Investigators,' is available directly from the Archive at the Family Life Development Center, MVR Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853 (phone: 607-255-7799) from the Archive website at <http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu> or from the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information (1-800-FYI-3366).

Each applicant institution should prepare a single submission packet composed of one faculty and from two to four individual student research applications. Each individual application will be evaluated against the criteria below. However, each institution will receive only one score. That score will consist of the average of the individual application scores. For this priority area only, as stated below, the text of each individual application may not exceed a maximum of 15 pages. The total text for the maximum five applications per institutional application cannot exceed a maximum of 75 pages, but the forms, assurances, and required attachments can add up to 25 more pages. Thus the total length of the institutional submission, including text, application, and all attachments for one faculty member and up to four students may be up to 100 pages. Applications of less than four students should be reduced by 15 page increments per student. Human Subjects Assurances must be completed for each student's research application. All other assurances should be submitted only once, by the institutional applicant.

NOTE: The academic institution, in accepting the award, agrees to waive overhead charges (indirect costs) and pass the entirety of the funds on to students and faculty as fellowships or stipends.

REVIEW CRITERIA: The following specific criteria will be used to review and evaluate the applications in this priority area. The applicant should respond to each element listed under each criterion. It is strongly recommended that applicants organize their proposals around these criteria, so that reviewers can readily find information that directly addresses each of the specific review criteria. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

CRITERION 1: OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

- (1) Describe the objectives of the proposed study. Discuss, briefly but specifically.
- (2) Explain the significance to the field of the proposed work and the need for knowledge development on the topic.
- (3) Describe the current state of knowledge related to the study problem. Provide a review of the relevant literature, including any pilot tests. Include all bibliographic references. Establish the need for the study as either a replication to validate existing knowledge or as a new study to fill a knowledge gap. If applicable, indicate how the proposed study is distinguished from the on-going research of which it may be a part.
- (4) Explain how the study is innovative.
- (5) Explain how the proposed study findings would inform policy, improve practice, and/or advance the science of child abuse and neglect research.

- (6) Explain how the proposed research would contribute to the overall effort to improve the safety, permanence and well-being of children and particular outcomes measures, as described above in Part I, as applicable.

CRITERION 2: APPROACH (50 POINTS)

- (1) State the exact research problem being addressed and the question(s) or hypothesis(es) to be tested.
- (2) Explain the conceptual and theoretical frameworks which provide a foundation for the proposed study.
- (3) Describe the proposed methodology. Define the terms, variables, and design to be used in the study.
- (4) If applicable to your application, describe the population and sampling plan, the rationale, strengths, and potential limitations for interpretations and generalization of findings due to the gender and/or ethnic composition of the proposed sample.
- (5) If applicable, describe the proposed recruitment and retention procedures. Provide realistic estimates of attrition, and discuss appropriate procedures for handling attrition or interpreting the findings of the study in light of attrition. Describe your sample specifically by its characteristics beyond its case classification by a local CPS agency, if applicable.
- (6) If applicable, describe data collection procedures and instruments which would be used. Include information on reliability and validity of the instruments with the population proposed.
- (7) Describe the data analysis plan and explain why it is appropriate to the proposed study.
- (8) If the study proposes secondary analysis of existing data, explain how you would access the data. Describe the original study including its design, measures, reports, data file structures, variables, codes, and the strengths and limitations of the data. Applicants proposing secondary analysis of existing data may run a preliminary descriptive analysis on existing variables of interest to replicate published findings, if they wish, but only as background. The proposed analysis must test a new hypothesis(es). Applicants must provide written assurance from an archive or an original investigator that draft reports of the findings of secondary analysis will be shared with an original investigator or other experts for comments, as appropriate.
- (9) Explain how this project would be sensitive to ethical issues that might arise and the provisions which would be made for reporting suspected abuse and/or neglect as governed by applicable laws and regulations.
- (10) Describe strategies which would be used to gain access to necessary clients, subjects, or information, data sets, and data bases, as applicable.
- (11) Describe the management plan to safeguard the integrity and confidentiality of data.
- (12) Describe products and/or reports which would be developed under the project and steps which would be undertaken to disseminate project products and findings.

CRITERION 3: ORGANIZATION PROFILES (20 POINTS)

- (1) Include a letter from a Dean or Chairperson, or person of similar supervisory stature, documenting the employment status of the faculty candidate, by name, and verifying an agreement between the dean or chairperson and the faculty candidate endorsing the involvement of the faculty candidate. The letter should also assure the funding agency that the academic institution, in accepting the award, has agreed to waive overhead charges (indirect costs) and pass the entirety of the funds on to students and faculty as fellowships or stipends.
- (2) Include another letter from a Dean or Chairperson mentioning each student by name assuring the funding agency of the student's enrollment and good standing at the institution and endorsing the students' capability to undertake a research project of this nature? If appropriate, all students may be endorsed in a single letter.
- (3) Describe the corporate capability of the institution to support a research initiative, in terms of the existing research infrastructure and academic climate. If the proposed project is a collaborative effort involving more than one agency or organization, attach letters of commitment documenting the nature and extent of such collaboration.
- (4) Discuss how the research hypothesis(es) presented in this application are particularly well-served by these particular students at this particular academic institution, if applicable. For example, is the institution an Historically Black College or University (HBCU) or does it primarily serve minority students (such as Native Americans, Hispanics, or African Americans)?
- (5) Describe capabilities of the students and the faculty member for undertaking the work proposed. Include a one page resume for each student candidate and a five page resume for the faculty candidate.
- (6) Explain the relationship between this proposed project and any other federally-funded work planned, anticipated, or underway, by the applicant(s).
- (7) Describe the management plan for ensuring that project goals will be accomplished. List the activities to be conducted in chronological order, showing a reasonable schedule for accomplishing each task and target dates.
- (8) Describe the role of the author of this proposal in the implementation of the proposed project.

CRITERION 4: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (10 POINTS)

- (1) Explain why the budget for this project is reasonable and justified for these awards which are, essentially, stipends. Discussion should refer to the budget information presented on Standard Forms 424 and 424A.
- (2) Describe the fiscal control and accounting procedures which would be used to ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement and accurate accounting of funds received under this program announcement.

- (3) State that the academic institution, in accepting the award, agrees to waive overhead charges (indirect costs) and pass the entirety of the funds on to students and faculty as fellowships or stipends.
- (4) Show that the budget includes funds for each student and the faculty member to attend the annual grantee meetings.

ASSURANCES: By signing the SF 424, the organization agrees to comply with the following:

- (1) The applicant will have the project fully functioning within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.
- (2) The applicant will participate if the Children's Bureau chooses to do a national evaluation or a technical assistance contract which relates to this priority area.
- (3) The students and the faculty member will attend an annual meeting with the Children's Bureau staff in Washington, D.C.
- (4) All required reports will be submitted in a timely manner, in recommended formats (to be provided), and the final report will also be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program.
- (5) A carefully prepared and thoroughly documented data set comprising the research data collected for the study would be deposited in the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect within two years of the termination of funding for the project.

PROJECT DURATION: The length of the projects may not exceed 24 months.

FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS: The maximum Federal share of the project is not to exceed \$130,000 per academic institution, with a maximum of \$25,000 per student and \$30,000 for the faculty member. Each application must involve two to four student-candidates and a single faculty member. No application seeking Federal funding exceeding the amount noted will be accepted for review.

MATCHING OR COST SHARING REQUIREMENT: There is no matching requirement. The academic institution, in accepting the award, agrees to waive overhead charges (indirect costs) and pass the entirety of the funds on to students and faculty as fellowships or stipends.

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED: It is anticipated that up to seven institutional awards will be funded.

LENGTH OF APPLICATION: The narrative section of each individual application for this area may not exceed 15 pages. The total text for the five applications cannot exceed 75 pages; but the forms, assurances, and required attachments may add up to 25 more pages. Thus, the total length of an institutional submission for one faculty member and the maximum four students, including text, application, and all attachments may be up to 100 pages. Institutional applications with less than four students should be reduced by 15 page increments per student. While Human Subjects Assurances must be submitted for each individual student's research application, all other assurances should be submitted only once, by the institutional applicant.

APPLICABLE GRANT REGULATIONS: Grants awarded under this program are subject to grant regulations under CFR Part 74 or 92.

CFDA NUMBER: 93.670

POST AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: All required reports must be submitted in a timely manner. Program progress reports must be submitted semi-annually. For example, for a project awarded by September 30, a semi-annual program progress report covering the period October through March and April through September is due for each year of the approved project period. A grantee is allowed 30 days to submit the report following the end of the six-month period. Recommended formats for the reports will be provided. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the project and will be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program. The financial reports (Form 269), both semi-annual and final, are also due on the same schedule as the program progress reports.

2003B.2: Improving Child Welfare Outcomes through Systems of Care

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: State, territory, county or city child welfare agencies and federally recognized Native American Tribes are eligible applicants. No more than one application will be funded from any one State in order to insure geographic distribution of the awards. Collaborative applications are acceptable, however applications from collaborations must identify a primary applicant responsible for administering the grant.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the awards under this priority is to assist States in addressing child welfare needs and issues raised during the Child and Family Service Reviews, in the statewide assessments, final reports, or Program Improvement Plans. These awards will be funded as cooperative agreements to build home and community based “Systems of Care” to improve outcomes for children and families at risk of child maltreatment, children who have been substantiated for maltreatment but have not been removed from the home, or children in state custody (foster care). A Systems of Care approach is based on the development of a strong infrastructure of interagency collaboration, individualized care practices, culturally competent services and supports, child and family involvement in all aspects of the system and measures of accountability. Systems of Care have shown promise in working with various at-risk child and family populations. Given the Children’s Bureau’s mission of child safety, permanency of placement, and well-being of children and families, it is incumbent that new and promising approaches to supporting children and families be tested. Systems of Care have shown promise in helping stabilize placements of children and addressing, in a positive fashion, the mental health needs of children, youth and their families. Child welfare is poised to take advantage of these lessons and implement this kind of systemic change that will fundamentally transform the child welfare system’s policies, practices, and relationships with other child and family serving agencies.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The child welfare system has undergone a tremendous amount of change during the past decade. Federal law has stimulated much of this change including the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, amendments to the Social Security Act, which authorized reviews of title IV-B and IV-E compliance, the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act, 1996 amendments to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, and the Children’s Health Act of 2000.

The Federal Government has recently implemented the Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) process. More than half of the States have gone through their initial review and many are in the process of preparing their Program Improvement Plans. The Child and Family Service Reviews emphasize child welfare practice principles such as family-based child welfare practice, community-based services, individualizing the case planning and service delivery system to the unique needs of children and families, and strengthening the capacity of parents to care for their children whenever possible and appropriate. In many situations, making lasting improvements that incorporate these principles requires changing the culture of child welfare agencies and the conceptual framework within which services are delivered.

States must direct their change efforts to both day-to-day practice in the field and the supportive infrastructure of the agency that affect the outcomes of services for children and families. This type of system change is difficult; requiring large amounts of time, strategic thinking and resources to implement the changes effectively. With the ever-present responsibility for assuring the safety, permanency and well-being of children in their care it is difficult for child welfare agencies to devote the time or resources needed to step back and make the necessary system adjustments.

While many systemic changes focus on State child welfare systems, other efforts are focusing on the agencies' child serving partners in education, mental health, juvenile justice and substance abuse in order to make similar reforms. For example, during the last twenty years public departments of mental health have begun to assume more responsibility for serving children and adolescents who have serious emotional disturbances. Federal legislation and subsequent appropriations have given State, county, city, territory, and federally recognized Native American Tribes funds to build interagency Systems of Care to address the mental health needs of youth in all child serving systems. In education, amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) call for more collaboration with other child serving systems in dealing with the various needs of children who are eligible for special education services. The juvenile justice system has also undertaken similar reforms including requirements to assess and address the mental health needs of youth in their custody.

This need for change within the child welfare system and its partner agencies calls for a new investment of time and funds in child welfare in order to achieve, manage, and sustain lasting change. State child welfare agencies must not only define their course toward systemic change internally, but must also be able to work collaboratively with partner agencies in order to assure the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and their families effectively.

The notion of community-based, interagency Systems of Care has shown merit in effectively serving the many needs of children within the context of their home, community and school. Does it have merit in helping achieve positive outcomes for children and families involved with the child welfare agency and its partner agencies? This grant program will try and answer that question.

Results of the Child and Family Service Reviews from the first thirty-two States indicate that a majority of those States are having difficulty achieving consistently positive outcomes in the areas of safety, permanency and well-being for children and families. Some of the areas cited as needing particular improvement are:

- More effective services to protect children and prevent removal from their homes (16 States)
- More comprehensive and consistent needs assessments of family members and appropriate matching of services to needs (31 States)
- More active involvement of children and parents in case planning (27 States)

- Increased attention to the educational needs of children (25 States)
- Increased attention to the physical health needs of children (20 States)
- Increased attention to the mental health needs of children and families (30 States)

Child welfare agencies are beginning to address issues that have emerged from the Child and Family Services Reviews through Program Improvement Plans, and some State agencies are using this as the opportunity to create true system change. This priority area builds on the need to pursue systemic change in child welfare in order to serve children and families more effectively. Questions to be answered by this effort include: Do the underlying values and principles of the Systems of Care model support needed systemic changes throughout child welfare agencies? How can a child welfare agency provide leadership in a Systems of Care approach that involves the commitment of other child serving agencies? What would a child welfare-driven Systems of Care model look like? How effective will the Systems of Care approach be on the various populations within the child welfare system? Can families be partners in a child welfare-led System of Care? How might a child welfare-led System of Care address the issue of children who might need to receive services prior to or without coming into state custody?

Systems of Care History Since the passage of Public Law 94-142 in 1975, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which insures that all children with disabilities have available to them a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment, there has been a growing movement to deliver services to children within the context of their home, school, and community. It has also become clear that no one child-serving agency, because of either policy, programmatic, or financial limitations, has the ability to provide all the necessary services and supports needed by families with children who have disabilities such as mental health disorders and/or are vulnerable to abuse and neglect. During the early 1980's Local Educational Authorities (LEA) joined child welfare in supporting children with various disabilities, yet children with serious emotional disturbances remained un-served, underserved, or inappropriately served with very few children getting the mental health services they needed. In 1984, the National Institute of Mental Health, United States Department of Health and Human Services, responded to this by beginning a program called the Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP), to help States design "Systems of Care" to address the mental health needs of children who were experiencing a serious emotional disturbance.

The Systems of Care principles of this program have had a profound impact on where and how services are delivered to this population of children and their families. The principles include:

- Children and their families are best served within the context of their home and community;
- The System of Care needs to be culturally competent;
- Families need to be involved in all aspects of designing, building and sustaining their System of Care;
- Each child and family is unique; therefore, services and supports need to be tailored to meet the individual needs of each child and family served;

- Plans of care need to address the strengths of children and their families;
- Interagency collaboration is critical for the success of the System of Care because the needs of children and families cut across agencies; and
- Measures of accountability need to be developed to insure that client and system-level outcomes are measured.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, from 1988 to 1992, supported testing the viability of these Systems of Care strategic plans by investing funds to build the infrastructure, create, and purchase the services for children who had the most profound disabilities. The results of this effort showed that, in fact, children who had serious emotional disturbances could be served effectively within the context of their home, school, and community and that these services and supports could be provided in a cost-effective manner.

In 1993, Congress passed legislation that created the Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program (Public Law 102-321). Built upon the work of the previous Federal grant program of the mid-eighties and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation effort, Federal funds were then allocated to help communities build Systems of Care. The Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services administers the program that has now served over 60 thousand children in over 80 communities. Notably, nearly 25 percent of the children served have been referred from the Child Welfare System.

The results of this program have been very promising. Children and youth enrolled in Systems of Care have shown greater placement stability than children with the same level of disability that are not enrolled; school grades have improved; enrollees have fewer contacts with the juvenile justice system; children and youth with the highest levels of pathology have shown significant gains in their mental health status; parent and youth satisfaction has been very high and costs associated with serving children who have the highest level of disability have been lowered.

Note: Applicant need not answer issues presented:

Emerging Child Welfare Issues A number of compelling issues have emerged in serving children within the child welfare system that the Children's Bureau believes may be positively affected by a move to an interagency, community-based Systems of Care approach:

- (1) Many children served in the child welfare system have multiple placements. Can individualizing care to children within a System of Care reduce placement mobility?
- (2) Successful reunification of children with birth families remains an issue with no clear understanding of when, why, or with whom it succeeds or fails. When children are reunified with their natural parents after being in an out-of-home placement, can the involvement of that child and family in Systems of Care increase the success rate of family reunification, maintaining safety and permanency?
- (3) Most States are failing to address the mental health well-being of children in their custody. Systems of Care offer a wide range of services and supports to meet the

individualized needs of children and families. Does the System of Care approach offer solutions to identify children, youth and their families with mental health disorders more effectively and develop service plans that address the mental health needs of children and youth?

- (4) Comprehensive strength-based assessments and ongoing assessments of the needs of children and families have been a challenge to implement routinely throughout the child welfare system. Can Systems of Care, with a focus on strength-based assessments and individualized plans of care, have relevance for the child welfare system?
- (5) Child welfare practice has been moving toward a family-centered approach to service delivery. What can be learned from the child and family-centered approaches of Systems of Care in the areas of assessment, family needs, type and delivery of service, and cultural competence?
- (6) Engaging older youth in the design and implementation of their individualized service plan is an important step in building services and supports that best address the needs and strengths of children and families. What can be learned from current practices within Systems of Care that give full voice to children and families?
- (7) Rural communities have presented the child welfare system with challenges in accessing services and offering a broad array of services and supports. What lessons can be learned from developing Systems of Care in rural communities concerning the availability of services, transportation challenges and cultural barriers?
- (8) Supervision of caseworkers, including clinical supervision, needs improvement in many child welfare systems. How can models of clinical supervision within Systems of Care contribute to worker skill and positive outcomes for clients?
- (9) Flexibility in visitation policies and practice in child welfare has been a cause of concern noted in the Child and Family Service Reviews. Can the flexibility of the team approach within the individualized service planning process built into Systems of Care help the child welfare system become more flexible in where, when, and how safe visitation takes place for the child, parent(s) and child protective service worker?
- (10) Using data to help the child welfare system to develop policy, improve or replace programs and better understand the children and families it is serving has proven problematic. Can Systems of Care, with a high degree of accountability built into its daily operation through the development of interagency data systems, provide evidence to insure high quality care and high levels of satisfaction, compliance and retention with children and families?

The following publications and Web pages are listed to give you further information about Systems of Care.

Systems of Care Resources These references are being made available to applicants to clarify the conceptual framework of Systems of Care. The applicants' target population may be different from the target populations of children described in these publications. They are provided as general orientation materials only.

Publications

Pires, Sheila A., *Building Systems of Care: A Primer*, Georgetown University, Center for Child and Human Development, Spring, 2002. 202-687-8803.

Systems of Care, Promising Practices Series, 13 Volumes.

<http://www.mentalhealth.org/cmhs/childrenscampaign/practices.asp>

Stroul, B., & Friedman, R. *A System of Care for Children and Youth with Severe Emotional Disturbances*, Georgetown University, Center for Child and Human Development, Rev. 1994. 202-687-8803.

Web Sites

National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health
Georgetown University, Center for Child and Human Development
<http://www.georgetown.edu/research/gucdc/cassp.html>

Research and Training Center for Children's Mental Health
University of South Florida
<http://rtckids.fmhi.usf.edu>

Child and Family Services Review Resources For more information about Child and Family Services Reviews, including State final reports and Findings, see
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/cwrp/index.htm>

NOTE: This program announcement seeks grantees to enter into Cooperative Agreements with the Children's Bureau to fulfill the purposes of these grants. A Cooperative Agreement is Federal Assistance in which substantial Federal involvement is anticipated. Under a Cooperative Agreement, the respective responsibilities of Federal staff and the awardee are negotiated prior to award. The awardee will be required to submit to the Children's Bureau for review and approval prior to finalization and dissemination: work plans, topics to be covered in technical assistance, plans for or actual resource lists, syntheses, summaries or literature reviews to be disseminated within the networks; and draft reports, training agendas, newsletters, and other materials as appropriate.

NOTE: Activities funded under this priority area are demonstration projects. See Section I for more information on preparing a successful demonstration project application.

NOTE: For programmatic assistance regarding this priority area, applicants may contact Janice Shafer at the Children's Bureau, 202-205-8172.

REVIEW CRITERIA: The following specific criteria will be used to review and evaluate the applications in this priority area. The applicant should respond to each element listed under each criterion. It is strongly recommended that applicants organize their proposals around these criteria, so that reviewers can readily find information that directly addresses each of the specific review criteria. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

CRITERION 1: OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

- (1) Describe how the proposed project addresses the findings of the applicant's state Child and Family Service Review: statewide assessment, final report, or Program Improvement Plan (if applicable).
- (2) Explain how this project would improve the child welfare system. Applicants should present a concise summary of the literature that reflects an understanding of the research on best practices and promising approaches in the child welfare system and Systems of Care.
- (3) State the goals and objectives of the proposed project. (Goals are herein defined as the end products of an effective project and objectives are defined as measurable steps for reaching these goals.)
- (4) Describe your understanding of System of Care principles as they apply to the child welfare system.
- (5) Describe the results and benefits to be derived from this project.
- (6) Describe the context of the proposed demonstration project, including the geographic location, environment, magnitude, and severity of the problems, and the needs to be addressed.
- (7) Describe the target population for the proposed project and explain how the proposed project responds to needs of this target population including issues of cultural competence.
- (8) Describe the plan to identify and address policy gaps or existing policies that are counter-productive to building a community-based System of Care.
- (9) Describe the plan to engage state level interagency officials in building and maintaining their System of Care.
- (10) Describe contextual factors which might facilitate or hinder the implementation of the proposed project, opportunities, and barriers might arise in its design and implementation, and explain how the project would address these issues.

CRITERION 2: APPROACH (50 Points)

- (1) Describe the timeline for implementing the proposed project, including major milestones and target dates.
- (2) Describe the strategy for the first 12-months (planning phase) of this project.
- (3) Describe the plan for designing and implementing the proposed System of Care in years 2 through 5. The plan should address the following: target population; the community(s) that the applicant plans to build their System of Care in; the demographics of this community(s); how the applicant plans to identify the service and support needs of the target population; how the applicant will ensure cultural competence within the System of Care; how the applicant will involve families in the design, implementation, and sustaining of their System of Care; how the applicant will routinely engage their interagency partners (Courts, Mental Health, Education, Juvenile Justice, Substance Abuse, Developmental Disabilities, Health, Domestic Violence, and Tribes or Tribal organizations); how the applicant plans to engage non-profit, faith and community-based service providers; and how the applicant will address training issues around individualized care, the wraparound process, cultural competence, strength-based approaches to care delivery, family involvement, data collection and clinical training.
- (4) Describe processes which would be put in place to insure that each child and family participates in developing an individualized plan of care. Explain what the applicant would do to ensure that each individualized care planning meeting involves all relevant stakeholders in the life of the child(ren) and family involved. Explain how the applicant would determine the lead case manager in cases involving interagency partners. Explain how the applicant would assess each child and family to ensure that all aspects of the child and family will be examined. Explain how the applicant would ensure a strength-based approach will be a part of the assessment. Describe the assessment tools which the applicant plans to use within their System of Care.
- (5) Describe the monitoring and review (gatekeeping) mechanisms which would be put in place to ensure that all placement resources either available or developed are utilized before an out-of- community placement is approved.
- (6) Describe the interagency processes which the applicant would put in place (State/County/City) to rectify financial, programmatic, or policy gaps that may surface in putting together a plan of care for a child and family. Explain how the applicant's community-based System of Care would connect to state-level interagency infrastructure development (unresolved local individualized plans of care, training, program development issues, data collection, policy development, social marketing strategies). Describe the interagency mechanisms the applicant would put in place to ensure maximum flexibility for the unimpeded use of blended funding for services and supports across agency lines. Describe the plan for building an interagency data collecting system for enrolled children and families. Explain how the applicant would deal with issues of confidentiality. Describe the plan for building and maintaining the interagency team infrastructure to ensure all case review processes are timely and responsive to the urgent needs of children and families.

- (7) Describe the plan for ensuring family involvement in case reviews, interagency mechanisms, and System of Care oversight.
- (8) Describe the plan for increasing the knowledge of the public concerning community-based Systems of Care in your area.
- (9) Explain how the applicant would transfer the knowledge gained through their efforts to other parts of the state.
- (10) Describe potential hurdles, barriers, and issues for implementing Systems of Care in the applicant's State with the target population, and explain how the proposed approach would address these issues.
- (11) Explain how the applicant would ensure that the necessary services are available so that the individual needs of children and families are met.
- (12) Describe the logic model for this project. Explain how it demonstrates strong links between proposed inputs and activities, and intended short-term and long-term outcomes. Describe the plan for measuring the achievement of these outcomes. (See Section I of this application package for more information on logic models.)
- (13) Describe the plan for evaluating the applicant's project, including responses to the following: the system level indicators and individual child and family outcome indicators that the applicant will use to show results of their System of Care; how the applicant will involve agency staff and parents in their evaluation efforts; how the applicant will measure each outcome, including worker, child, and family satisfaction; if the evaluation will be housed within the System of Care central office; who will perform the evaluation; whether or not data analysis part of the evaluation plan; how the applicant will involve their interagency partners in the evaluation; what the points of contact with children and families to collect the necessary data (intake, 6 months, 12 months, 18 months, etc.) will be; the types of instruments that the applicant will use to collect the data; how the applicant will ensure that their instruments are culturally competent; how the applicant will use the data collected within their System of Care, their community, and/or their State; and how the applicant plans to use their data to inform policy development. Agencies that do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, comprehensive evaluation of the project are advised to contract with a third-party evaluator specializing in social science or evaluation, or a university or college to conduct the evaluation. If not using internal resources for project evaluation, what is the plan for securing an external evaluator?
- (14) Describe the plan for ensuring compliance with all Departmental regulations and procedures pertaining to confidentiality and careful handling of information on individuals, families and evaluation data, and obtaining informed consent from participants. Describe your plans regarding an Institutional Review Board (IRB) review, if applicable.
- (15) Describe the roles and responsibilities of each partner agency or organization. These should be clearly specified. Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide letters of commitment from key stakeholders of their proposed System of Care.
- (16) Describe the plan for continuing this project beyond the period of Federal funding.

- (17) Describe the plan for summarizing, reporting and disseminating the project's promising practices, lessons learned and evaluation findings to key audiences.

CRITERION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES (20 Points)

- (1) Describe your organization's capabilities and experience relative to this project. Discuss experience with and provide details of administration, replication, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of similar cross-agency systems change projects. If the application involves partnering and/or subcontracting with other agencies/organizations, then the application should include an organizational capability statement for each participating organization documenting the ability of the partners and/or subcontractors to fulfill their assigned roles and functions.
- (2) Describe relevant knowledge, experience, and capabilities the proposed full-time project director and key project staff, including the evaluator, bring to the project. Explain whether staff would be dedicated to the operation of the various processes of the System of Care. Describe the experience of the project director in working with children, youth, and families. Discuss the background of staff to manage and implement a project of this size, scope and complexity, including experience and expertise in cross-agency systems change and child welfare case review. Include brief resumes of these staff and indicate their hours- per-week commitment to this project. Describe the role, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors, and/or partners. Include a list of organizations and consultants who will work with the program along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution. Show evidence that the management plan, staffing pattern, project organization, and resources are appropriate and adequate for carrying out all aspects of the proposed project, and are responsive to issues of language, and race/ethnicity/culture.
- (3) Describe the relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated or underway with Federal assistance by the applicant.
- (4) Describe the management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project, on time and within budget including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality. The role and responsibilities of the lead agency should be clearly defined and, if appropriate, applicants should discuss the management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors, and consultants.
- (5) Describe the role of the author of this proposal in the implementation of the proposed project.

CRITERION 4: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (10 Points)

- (1) Justify proposed project costs in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits gained. Discussion should refer to the budget information presented on Standard Forms 424 and 424A and the applicant's budget justification.
- (2) Describe the fiscal control and accounting procedures which would be used to ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement and accurate accounting of funds received under this program announcement.
- (3) Allocate sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director, two interagency partners, a family member (if this does not present a burden to the family member) representing the participating families and the project evaluator to attend two semi-annual three-day grantees' meetings in Washington, D.C. In year one a kickoff meeting will be held within the first six months of the project in Washington, DC. (Attendance at these meetings is a grant requirement.)
- (4) Allocate at least 10 percent of the budget for evaluation of the project.

ASSURANCES: By signing the SF 424, the organization agrees to comply with the following:

- (1) The applicant will have the project fully functioning within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.
- (2) The applicant will participate if the Children's Bureau chooses to do a national evaluation or a technical assistance contract that relates to this priority area.
- (3) The project director, two interagency partners, a family member representing the participating families and the project evaluator will attend two semi-annual three-day meetings with the Children's Bureau staff in Washington, D.C. during each year of the five-year grant program.
- (4) All required reports will be submitted in a timely manner, in recommended formats (to be provided), and the final report will also be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program.
- (5) Funds for this project will be used only to develop and support the infrastructure of the System of Care. Services for individual children, youth and families needs must be paid from existing agency or interagency resources or other funds.

PROJECT DURATION: The projects will be awarded for a period of 60 months. The initial grant award will be for a 12-month budget period. The award of continuation funding beyond each 12-month budget period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the government.

FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS: The maximum Federal share of the project is up to \$500,000. No application seeking Federal funding exceeding the amount noted will be accepted for review.

MATCHING REQUIREMENT: There is no matching requirement.

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED: It is anticipated that up to ten awards will be made.

LENGTH OF APPLICATION: The length of the application is limited to 60 pages, including all forms and attachments. Any pages over that number will be removed and will not be reviewed.

APPLICABLE GRANT REGULATIONS: Grants awarded under this program are subject to grant regulations under CFR Part 74 or 92.

CFDA NUMBER: 93.670

POST AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: All required reports must be submitted in a timely manner. Program progress reports must be submitted semi-annually. For example, for a project awarded by September 30, a semi-annual program progress report covering the period October through March and April through September is due for each year of the approved project period. A grantee is allowed 30 days to submit the report following the end of the six-month period. Recommended formats for the reports will be provided. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the project and will be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program. The financial reports (Form 269), both semi-annual and final, are also due on the same schedule as the program progress reports.

2003C: Child Welfare Training Project Activities

Section 1V - B, Section 426 (a) 1 (C) of the Social Security Act as amended authorizes funds for grants to public or non-profit institutions of higher learning for specific projects to train personnel to work in the field of child welfare. Priority Area topics for Child Welfare Training activities are selected to meet emerging needs. The focus of this training is to provide professional education opportunities to prospective and current public child welfare agency staff, and to develop training curricula in specific areas.

2003C.1 Professional Education for Public Child Welfare Practitioners:

2003C.1A: Professional Education for Prospective MSW Level Public Child Welfare Staff (Awarding MSW Degree)

2003C.1B: Professional Education for Current Public Child Welfare Agency Staff (Awarding BSW and/or MSW Degree)

2003C.1C: Professional Education for Prospective and Current American Indian and or/ Alaskan Native Public Child Welfare Staff who are currently enrolled or plan to enroll in BSW or MSW Social Work Programs (Awarding BSW and /or MSW Degree)

NOTE: In order to be responsive to a number of unique, professional education needs related to public child welfare practice, this priority area is being subdivided into three subcategories as outlined above. **An institution may submit only one application under this priority area and must identify the sub-priority area to which it is responding** in the abstract and narrative sections of the application.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Public or non-profit institutions of higher education with accredited social work education programs. Priority will be given to applicants with a strong public child welfare agency/university partnership and/or applicants prepared to re-design their curriculum to maximize student learning opportunities for work in public child welfare agencies. Previously funded applicants under this priority area will not be precluded from receiving a grant.

PURPOSE: To provide professional education opportunities to prospective and current public child welfare agency staff by offering traineeships to obtain child welfare training. This competency-based, child welfare training will place emphasis on developing the critical knowledge, values, and skills that are necessary to respond to the complex problems confronting children and families in the child welfare system.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Under section 426(a) (1) (C) of the Social Security Act, Federal grants are available to public or non-profit institutions of higher learning to provide traineeships to prepare personnel to work in the field of child welfare. Applicants for these grants

must meet the requirements of section 429 of the Act, which specifies the conditions under which these traineeships are awarded that include: (1) who will participate in such training at a public or private non-profit child welfare agency, (2) who will be employed in child welfare agencies for a period of years equivalent to the period of traineeship after graduating from the education program, and (3) how the expenses for the education will be repaid if there is a failure to comply with the agreement. The educational institutions must also provide evidence of compliance with the provisions of section 429 of the Act that the institution will (1) enter into agreements with child welfare agencies for on-site training of recipients, (2) permit an individual who is employed in the field of child welfare services to apply for a traineeship with a stipend if the traineeship furthers the progress of the individual toward the completion of a degree requirement, and (3) develop and implement a system that tracks the employment record of the recipient for the 3-year period that begins on the date any recipient completes the traineeship program.

This priority area was originally developed for the FY 1992 Child Welfare Services Training Program Announcement and was included again in FY 1993, 1995, 1998 and 2000.

REVIEW CRITERIA: The following specific criteria will be used to review and evaluate the applications in this priority area. The applicant should respond to each element listed under each criterion. It is strongly recommended that applicants organize their proposals around these criteria, so that reviewers can readily find information that directly addresses each of the specific review criteria. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

CRITERION 1: OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

- (1) State the proposed project's goals and objectives and explain how they relate to the training needs of public child welfare agency staff.
- (2) Explain how this project would enhance social work education's ability to prepare students effectively for public child welfare agency practice, encourage their entry into the child welfare profession and increase the number of workers with BSW (Bachelors of Social Work) or MSW (Masters of Social Work) degrees.
- (3) Describe the characteristics of the proposed student populations and their particular training needs.
- (4) Describe special approach(es) and strategies which would be utilized to provide the training needed to serve minority, Native American or Alaskan Native client populations, if applicable.
- (5) Describe changes which would be made to the existing curriculum for the inclusion of competency-based child welfare oriented course content designed to enable graduates to function in public child welfare agencies.
- (6) Describe specific results and benefits which would be derived from the project and explain how these link to the proposed project's stated objectives.

- (7) Describe specific, measurable outcomes which are expected as a result of the proposed training of current and prospective public agency staff in this project.
- (8) Describe lessons which would be learned from the project and explain how they would improve child welfare practice.

CRITERION 2: APPROACH (50 Points)

- (1) Describe the challenges of providing training to support and enhance public/Tribal child welfare agency staff capabilities to achieve child welfare outcomes.
- (2) Explain how this project would approach the development and implementation of a BSW or MSW level child welfare curriculum in field placements that addresses the training needs of the public/Tribal child welfare agency staff.
- (3) Describe the types of field experiences, including supervision, which would be provided to the students receiving the traineeship grants. Explain how these field experiences would be consistent with the competencies necessary to work in public/tribal child welfare agencies.
- (4) Explain what the proposed curriculum would consist of and how it would build on, expand and strengthen existing curriculum approaches/models.
- (5) Describe past and/or current collaboration between the applicant and public child welfare (State/local and Tribal) agencies. Explain how this project would be coordinated with and build upon existing partnerships with such agencies.
- (6) Describe the administrative and organizational interface which would be required in this project between the applicant and State agencies, Tribal Organizations, community agencies, academic departments, other disciplines, institutions, etc.. Applications must include a letter from the State/Tribal agency committing to coordination with the school/department of social work and indicating intent to participate in the project. This letter of agreement must be signed by the Director of the State/Tribal Child Welfare Agency.
- (7) Explain who the trainees would be; how many are expected to be trained over the life of the project; what the process would be for selection and recruitment of trainees; and the specific strategies which would be implemented for recruiting minority, American Indian and/or Alaskan Native trainees.
- (8) Describe the plan for ensuring that students work in the public child welfare field after graduation. Include a plan for a follow-up of students to determine their subsequent employment in public child welfare agencies.
- (9) Describe the plan for project evaluation. Explain how it would measure the extent to which project objectives have been met and the project's general impact on competency-based curriculum development, student acquisition of competencies and effectiveness of program services.
- (10) Describe the plan for dissemination of the curriculum and project evaluation findings.

CRITERION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES (20 Points)

- (1) Describe this organization's capabilities and experience in training State public/Tribal child welfare staff and in developing child welfare curricula. Discuss experience with and provide details of collaboration with State/Tribal child welfare agencies on training initiatives.
- (2) Describe the knowledge, experience, and capabilities which the proposed project director and key project staff bring to the project. Describe their experience in managing a project of this size, scope, and complexity, including the development of training curriculum necessary under the project design. Include brief resumes of these staff.
- (3) Describe the relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated or underway with Federal assistance by the applicant.
- (4) Describe the management plan to achieve the project goals.
- (5) Describe the role of the author of this proposal in the implementation of the proposed project.

CRITERION 4: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (10 Points)

- (1) Explain why the costs of the proposed project are reasonable, in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits. Discussion should refer to the budget information presented on Standard Forms 424 and 424A and the applicant's budget justification.
- (2) Describe the fiscal control and accounting procedures which would be used to ensure prudent use and proper and timely disbursement and accurate accounting of funds received under this program announcement.
- (3) Allocate sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director and the evaluator to attend an annual 3-day grantees' meeting in Washington, D.C. (Attendance at these meetings is a grant requirement.)
- (4) Allocate sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director and the evaluator to attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first three months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C. (Attendance at this early kick-off meeting is a grant requirement for new grantees, but not for current or previous grantees under this priority area.)

ASSURANCES: By signing the SF 424, the organization agrees to comply with the following:

- (1) The applicant will have the project fully functioning within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.
- (2) The applicant will participate if the Children's Bureau chooses to do a national evaluation or a technical assistance contract which relates to this priority area.
- (3) The project director and the evaluator will attend an annual 3-day grantees' meeting in Washington, D.C.

- (4) The project director and the evaluator will also attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first three months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C. (Attendance at this early kick-off meeting is a grant requirement for new grantees, but not for current or previous grantees under this priority area.)
- (5) All required reports will be submitted in a timely manner, in recommended formats (to be provided), and the final report will also be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program.

PROJECT DURATION: Sub-priority area 2003C.1A will be awarded for a project period not to exceed 48 months. Sub-priorities 2003C.1B and 2003C.1C will be awarded for a project period not to exceed 60 months. The initial grant award will be for a 12-month budget period. The award of continuation funding beyond each 12-month budget period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the government.

FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS: The maximum Federal share is not to exceed \$75,000 for the 12-month budget period. No application seeking Federal funding exceeding the amount noted will be accepted for review. A traineeship must not exceed \$7,500 per student per budget year. A minimum of 75 per cent of the total project funds must be used for traineeships.

MATCHING OR COST SHARING REQUIREMENT: No matching funds are required for the portion of the budget that pays for traineeships. However, grantees must provide a match to equal at least 25 percent of the total cost of grant activities other than traineeships. The total approved cost of these non-traineeship activities is the sum of the ACYF share and the non-Federal share. The non-Federal share may be met by cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through a cash contribution. Therefore, a project requesting \$75,000 in Federal funds (with \$56,250 for traineeships and \$18,750 for non-traineeship activities per budget period) must include a match of at least \$6,250 (25 percent of the total cost for the non-traineeship activities). Applicants should provide a letter of commitment verifying the actual amount of the non-Federal share of project costs.

The following example shows how to calculate the required 25 percent match amount for the non-traineeship portion of a \$75,000 grant:

	\$75,000	(Federal share)
times	.25	(% of federal share allowable for non-traineeship activities)
equals	\$18,750	(maximum amount allowable for non-traineeship activities)
divided by	.75	(100% - 25%)
equals	\$25,000	(total non-traineeship activity cost including match)
minus	\$18,750	(federal share)
equals	\$6,250	(required 25% match)

Because this is a training grant, indirect costs for these projects shall not exceed 8 percent. Funds from this grant cannot be used to match title IV-E training funds. If approved for funding, grantees will be held accountable for the commitment of non-Federal resources and failure to provide the required amount will result in a disallowance of unmatched Federal funds.

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED: It is anticipated that up to 27 projects will be funded: up to eleven in sub-priority area 2003C.1A, up to twelve in sub-priority area 2003C.1B and up to four in sub-priority area 2003C.1C.

LENGTH OF APPLICATION: The length of the application is limited to 45 pages, including all forms and attachments. Any pages over that number will be removed and will not be reviewed.

APPLICABLE GRANT REGULATIONS: Grants awarded under this program are subject to grant regulations under CFR Part 74 or 92.

CFDA NUMBER: 93.648

POST AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: All required reports must be submitted in a timely manner. Program progress reports must be submitted semi-annually. For example, for a project awarded by September 30, a semi-annual program progress report covering the period October through March and April through September is due for each year of the approved project period. A grantee is allowed 30 days to submit the report following the end of the six-month period. Recommended formats for the reports will be provided. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the project and will be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program. The financial reports (Form 269), both semi-annual and final, are also due on the same schedule as the program progress reports.

2003C.2: Training for Effective Child Welfare Practice in Rural Communities

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Public or non-profit institutions of higher education with accredited social work programs or other accredited bachelor- or graduate-level programs leading to a degree relevant to work in child welfare. Under this priority area, only those institutions that have knowledge and experience in training professionals for work in rural communities and have child welfare-related experience in serving rural America would be eligible to apply.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this priority area is to develop, field test, revise, implement, evaluate, and disseminate a field-tested, competency-based training curriculum and training plan to enhance frontline and/or supervisory staff capacity to provide effective child welfare services in rural communities.

NOTE: The Census Bureau definition of rural will be used to determine eligibility under this priority area. The weblink for this definition is: <http://landview.census.gov/population/censusdata/urdef.txt>. In the Census Bureau definition, territory, population, and housing units not classified as urban constitute "rural." The Census Bureau defines "urban" as comprising all territory, population, and housing units in urbanized areas and in places of 2,500 or more persons outside urbanized areas. An urbanized area comprises one or more places ("central place") and the adjacent densely settled surrounding territory ("urban fringe") that together have a minimum of 50,000 persons. The urban fringe generally consists of contiguous territory having a density of at least 1,000 persons per square mile. The weblink contains additional information and the complete criteria are available from the Chief, Geography Division, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Recognizing the unique characteristics and needs of rural communities and the relevance of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) mission to these communities; the Secretary of HHS, Tommy G. Thompson, issued a charge on July 25, 2001 to all HHS divisions to improve and enhance the provision of health and social services to rural Americans. Five goals were identified by a HHS Rural Task Force: (1) improving rural communities' access to quality health and human services, (2) strengthening rural families, (3) strengthening rural communities and supporting economic development, (4) partnering with States, local and tribal governments to support rural communities, and (5) supporting rural policy/decision-making as well as ensuring a rural voice in the consultation process for the 65 million people living in rural America.

The Child and Family Services Reviews (CFS) Reviews that were authorized by the 1994 amendments to the Social Security Act have shed light on the need to identify and address the unique skills and knowledge necessary for effective child welfare practice in rural communities. Reviewers are finding that the responsibilities of child welfare workers in rural areas are often more generic than specialized, as opposed to their urban counterparts. These rural workers need a different set of skills to deal with children and families across multiple areas of intervention.

There are also issues regarding the availability and accessibility of services in rural areas, skills associated with engaging families in case planning when they may be located in remote areas and identifying and using more "natural" support systems to assist families and protect children. Thus, Child Welfare Training grants on rural child welfare services will not only support the goals of the HHS Rural Initiative, but will also assist rural communities in meeting needs being identified by Child and Family Service Reviews.

The Children's Bureau proposes to fund efforts to develop, implement, field-test, and evaluate competency-based training curricula designed to assist rural States/communities in broadening the service array, managing barriers to effective services, working effectively with rural populations, improving access to quality child welfare services, strengthening rural families, including strengthening the role of fathers, and partnering with State, local and tribal governments to improve child welfare services in rural communities.

REVIEW CRITERIA: The following specific criteria will be used to review and evaluate the applications in this priority area. The applicant should respond to each element listed under each criterion. It is strongly recommended that applicants organize their proposals around these criteria, so that reviewers can readily find information that directly addresses each of the specific review criteria. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

CRITERION 1: OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

- (1) Explain why there is a need for a specific curriculum and training to strengthen child welfare staff competencies for working in rural areas.
- (2) Describe the issues faced by rural children and families in the child welfare system and how appropriate child welfare intervention approaches are different for this population.
- (3) State the goals and objectives of the proposed project. (Goals are herein defined as the end products of an effective project and objectives are defined as measurable steps for reaching these goals.)
- (4) Explain how the proposed project would enhance child welfare agency capacity to provide coordinated services in rural communities through knowledge development, child welfare training specific to rural communities, resource development activities, partnerships with faith-based initiatives, and collaboration with other child serving agencies.
- (5) Explain how the proposed project would increase access to services in rural communities through educational and public awareness campaigns and other means.
- (6) Explain how the proposed project would provide a better understanding of statutory, regulatory, administrative, policy, and resource barriers to child welfare services in rural communities in order to develop a strategy for overcoming such barriers.
- (7) Explain how the proposed project would assist States in developing an outreach strategy for serving rural populations.

- (8) Explain how the proposed project would develop a strong university/child welfare agency partnership furthering the goal of improving child welfare related training and technical assistance to frontline workers and their supervisors.
- (9) Describe the results and benefits to be derived by developing, field testing, implementing, evaluating, and disseminating a training curriculum that is focused on rural child welfare practice.
- (10) Describe who the trainees would be and state how many public agency staff would be trained over the life of the project.
- (11) Explain how the lessons learned from the project would benefit policy, practice, and theory development in addressing the needs, issues, and crises of rural children and families in the child welfare system.

CRITERION 2: APPROACH (50 Points)

- (1) Describe the timeline for implementing the proposed project, including major milestones and target dates. Projects are expected to complete the development, field testing and revisions of the curriculum in a timely manner, so that there can be at least one year of training and a thorough evaluation of its effectiveness, within the 5 year project timeframe.
- (2) Describe the plan to ensure that this project will deliver training services to child welfare staff in agencies that work with a target population which qualifies as rural, as defined in this priority area.
- (3) Describe the issues related to interventions with rural children and families and explain the differences and similarities between such an approach and typical child welfare practice.
- (4) Describe the challenges of providing and improving training within a public child welfare agency that provides services to rural children and families and explain how the proposed project would overcome these challenges.
- (5) Explain how the proposed approach to developing a curriculum is based on a conceptual framework, research, and practice experience. Specifically, describe how the proposed curriculum would build on, expand, and strengthen the existing curriculum approaches/models for rural child welfare services.
- (6) Describe the applicable rural service principles and the challenges to incorporating these principles within child welfare practices. Explain how the proposed project would overcome these challenges.
- (7) Describe the plan to ensure that the curriculum development and training of staff will be culturally responsive to the diverse, rural child welfare population.
- (8) Explain how the proposed curriculum would address the need for training rural child welfare workers in the areas of healthy families, healthy marriage, and responsible fatherhood. Describe opportunities that would be provided for trainees to apply this knowledge.

- (9) Describe the proposed criteria for selection and recruitment of rural child welfare agency trainees. Describe specific strategies for recruiting minority and Tribal agency trainees.
- (10) Describe the plan for evaluating the training curriculum. Explain how the effectiveness of the competency-based curriculum would be field-tested and the curriculum modified, if necessary. Describe the location of the proposed project and state which State/local/Tribal child welfare agencies have expressed commitment to participate in the field testing of the proposed curriculum. The application should include letters of commitment from these organizations.
- (11) Describe the evaluation strategy to measure the effectiveness of the competency-based curricula and training plan for improving child welfare practice and outcomes in rural communities. Agencies that do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, comprehensive evaluation of the project are advised to contract with a third-party evaluator specializing in social science or evaluation, or a university or college to conduct the evaluation. If not using internal resources for project evaluation, describe the plan for securing an external evaluator.
- (12) Describe the plan for dissemination of the curriculum and project evaluation findings.

CRITERION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES (20 Points)

- (1) Describe the applicant organization's capabilities and experience in training State public child welfare staff and in developing child welfare curricula. Discuss experience with and provide details of collaboration with State/Tribal child welfare agencies on training initiatives. If the application involves partnering and/or subcontracting with other agencies/organizations, then the application should include an organizational capability statement for each participating organization documenting the ability of the partners and/or subcontractors to fulfill their assigned roles and functions.
- (2) Describe the applicant organization's capabilities and experience relative to rural communities, rural children and families, and rural child welfare. Describe the organization's knowledge and experience in training professionals for work in rural communities, including an understanding of the demographics, culture, economics, and service delivery system in rural communities.
- (3) Describe the knowledge, experience, and capabilities which the proposed project director and key project staff bring to the project. Discuss their background to manage a project of this size, scope, and complexity, including the development of training curriculum and delivery of training services necessary under the project design. Include brief resumes of these staff. Describe the role, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors and/or partners. Include a list of organizations and consultants who will work with the program along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.
- (4) Explain the relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated or underway with Federal assistance by the applicant.

- (5) Describe the management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality. The role and responsibilities of the lead agency should be clearly defined and, if appropriate, applicants should discuss the management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors and consultants.
- (6) Describe the role of the author of this proposal in the implementation of the proposed project.

CRITERION 4: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (10 Points)

- (1) Explain why the costs of the proposed project are reasonable, in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits. Discussion should refer to the budget information presented on Standard Forms 424 and 424A and the applicant's budget justification.
- (2) Describe the fiscal control and accounting procedures which would be used to ensure prudent use and proper and timely disbursement and accurate accounting of funds received under this program announcement.
- (3) Allocate sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director or a key staff member, project evaluator and a representative of the state child welfare agency to attend an annual 3-day grantees' meeting in Washington, D.C., and to provide for the project director, the evaluator and a representative of the state child welfare agency to attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first three months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C. (Attendance at these meetings is a grant requirement.)

ASSURANCES: By signing the SF 424, the organization agrees to comply with the following:

- (1) The applicant will have the project fully functioning within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.
- (2) The applicant will participate if the Children's Bureau chooses to do a national evaluation or a technical assistance contract which relates to this priority area.
- (3) The project director or a key staff member, project evaluator and a representative of the state child welfare agency will attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first three months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C. and an annual three to five day meeting with the Children's Bureau staff in Washington, D.C.
- (4) All required reports will be submitted in a timely manner, in recommended formats (to be provided), and the final report will also be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program.

PROJECT DURATION: Awards will be made for a project period of 60 months. The initial grant will be for a 12-month budget period. The award of continuation funding beyond each 12-month period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of the

grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the government.

FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS: The maximum Federal share of the project is up to \$200,000 per budget year. No application seeking Federal funding exceeding the amount noted will be accepted for review.

MATCHING OR COST SHARING REQUIREMENT: The grantee must provide at least 25 percent of the total approved cost of the project. The total approved cost is the sum of the Federal share and the non-Federal share. Therefore, a project requesting \$200,000 per budget period must include a match of at least \$66,667 per budget period. Applicants should provide a letter of commitment verifying the actual amount of the non-Federal share of project costs.

The following example shows how to calculate the required 25% match amount for a \$200,000 grant:

	\$200,000	(Federal share)
divided by	.75	(100% - 25%)
equals	\$266,667	(total project cost including match)
minus	\$200,000	(federal share)
equals	\$66,667	(required 25% match)

The non-Federal share may be cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. If approved for funding, grantees will be held accountable for the commitment of non-Federal resources and failure to provide the required amount will result in a disallowance of unmatched Federal funds.

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED: It is estimated that up to seven projects will be funded.

LENGTH OF APPLICATION: The length of the application is limited to 50 pages, including all forms and attachments. Any pages over that number will be removed and will not be reviewed.

APPLICABLE GRANT REGULATIONS: Grants awarded under this program are subject to grant regulations under CFR Part 74 or 92.

CFDA NUMBER: 93.648

POST AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: All required reports must be submitted in a timely manner. Program progress reports must be submitted semi-annually. For example, for a project awarded by September 30, a semi-annual program progress report covering the period October through March and April through September is due for each year of the approved

project period. A grantee is allowed 30 days to submit the report following the end of the six-month period. Recommended formats for the reports will be provided. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the project and will be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program. The financial reports (Form 269), both semi-annual and final, are also due on the same schedule as the program progress reports.

2003C.3 Developing Models of Effective Child Welfare Staff Recruitment and Retention Training

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Public or non-profit institutions of higher education with accredited social work education programs or other accredited bachelor or graduate level programs leading to a degree relevant to work in child welfare.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this priority area is to develop, field test, revise, implement, evaluate, and disseminate an effective and comprehensive training curriculum and model for recruiting and retaining a competent work force in public child welfare agencies.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Recent work force studies and literature reviews indicate that child welfare agencies are experiencing a severe work force crisis involving staff shortages, high staff turnover rates and large caseloads. For example, the results of a child welfare work-force study conducted by the Alliance for Children and Families, the American Public Human Services Association, and the Child Welfare League of America during the fall of 2000 and involving 43 States indicated that an average of 20 percent of the workers and 8 percent of the supervisors left state agencies during the course of one year and that the average vacancy rate for direct service workers was 10 percent on Sept. 1, 2000. The Children's Bureau has identified the need for developing and implementing a training model on recruiting and retaining a strong work force in public child welfare as a critical priority.

In a literature search conducted by a Child Welfare League of America Work Force Development Initiative, it was found that at least five interrelated themes consistently appear as characteristics of organizations that have been successful in recruiting and retaining a skilled, motivated work force (Alwon, F. & Reitz Andrew, May, 2001). Characteristics of such organizations include: (1) employees that are connected and powerfully committed to the unifying mission of the organization, (2) open and honest communication among all levels of the organization, (3) emphasis placed on relationships, partnerships, and team work, (4) strong emphasis on learning, innovation, and development at both the individual and organizational level, and (5) employees who are free to make decisions and take action without unnecessary interference, while at the same time recognizing that child welfare agencies cannot operate effectively without clear guidelines.

The Children's Bureau is particularly interested in curricula that address such work force issues including the importance of an agency unifying mission that values staff satisfaction and child and family outcomes, cultivating a culturally competent work-force, caseload size and working conditions, the impact of staff turnover on service delivery, worker input into training and decision making, the relationship between training and service delivery, the importance of conducting entrance and exit interviews, organizational climate and a positive working environment, and child welfare agency/university partnerships as tools for the recruitment and retention of child welfare workers.

REVIEW CRITERIA: The following specific criteria will be used to review and evaluate the applications in this priority area. The applicant should respond to each element listed under each criterion. It is strongly recommended that applicants organize their proposals around these criteria, so that reviewers can readily find information that directly addresses each of the specific review criteria. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

CRITERION 1: OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

- (1) Describe the need for a specific curriculum and training for child welfare staff recruitment and retention in general, and important issues which are specific to your state.
- (2) Describe the recruitment and retention issues faced by child welfare agencies in the 21st century.
- (3) State the goals and objectives of the proposed project. (Goals are herein defined as the end products of an effective project and objectives are defined as measurable steps for reaching these goals.)
- (4) Explain how the proposed project would enhance child welfare agency capacity to recruit and retain qualified staff.
- (5) Explain how the proposed project would assist States in developing an outreach strategy for recruiting qualified child welfare staff.
- (6) Explain how the proposed university/child welfare agency partnership would promote curriculum development activities and training of child welfare managers and supervisors on staff recruitment and retention strategies.
- (7) Describe the results and benefits to be derived by developing, field testing, implementing, evaluating, and disseminating a training curriculum that is focused on recruitment and retention of child welfare staff.
- (8) Describe who the trainees would be and state how many public agency staff would be trained over the life of the project.
- (9) Explain how the lessons learned from the project would benefit policy, practice, and theory development in addressing the challenge of staff recruitment and retention in the child welfare system.

CRITERION 2: APPROACH (50 Points)

- (1) Describe the timeline for implementing the proposed project, including major milestones and target dates. Projects are expected to complete the development, field testing and revisions of the curriculum in a timely manner, so that there can be at least one year of training and a thorough evaluation of its effectiveness, within the 5 year project timeframe.
- (2) Describe the challenges of providing and improving training related to work-force issues within a public child welfare agency, and explain how the proposed project would overcome these challenges.

- (3) Explain how the proposed approach to developing a curriculum is based on a conceptual framework, research and practice experience. Specifically, describe how the proposed curriculum would build on, expand and strengthen the existing curriculum approaches/models for recruitment and retention of child welfare staff.
- (4) Describe the applicable staff recruitment and retention best practices and principles, and the challenges to incorporating these principles within child welfare practices. Explain how the proposed project would overcome these challenges.
- (5) Describe the relationship between implementing your State's Child and Family Service Review Program Improvement Plan and recruiting and retaining a competent child welfare work-force.
- (6) Describe the plan to ensure that the curriculum development and training of staff would be culturally responsive to the diverse child welfare population.
- (7) Explain how the proposed training curriculum would address the particular interests of the Children's Bureau as described in the Background Information section of this priority area.
- (8) Describe the criteria for selection and recruitment of child welfare agency trainees and specific strategies for recruiting minority and Tribal agency trainees.
- (9) Describe the plan for field testing the training curriculum. Explain how the effectiveness of the competency-based curriculum would be field-tested and the curriculum modified, if necessary. Describe the location of the proposed project field test and list the State/local/Tribal child welfare agencies that have expressed commitment to participate in the field testing of the proposed curriculum. The application should include letters of commitment from these organizations.
- (10) Describe the evaluation strategy to measure the extent to which effective child welfare staff recruitment and retention strategies are learned and utilized by child welfare managers and supervisors, and the extent to which these strategies have a positive impact on public child welfare staff recruitment and retention. Agencies that do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, comprehensive evaluation of the project are advised to contract with a third-party evaluator specializing in social science or evaluation, or a university or college to conduct the evaluation. If not using internal resources for project evaluation, describe the plan for securing an external evaluator.
- (11) Describe the plan for dissemination of the curriculum and project evaluation findings.
- (12) Describe the plan for continuing this project beyond the period of Federal funding.

CRITERION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES (20 Points)

- (1) Describe the applicant organization's capabilities and experience in training State public child welfare staff and in developing child welfare curricula. Discuss experience with and provide details of collaboration with State/Tribal child welfare agencies on training initiatives. If the application involves partnering and/or subcontracting with other agencies/organizations, then the application should include an organizational capability statement for each participating organization documenting the ability of the partners and/or subcontractors to fulfill their assigned roles and functions.

- (2) Describe the applicant organization's capabilities and experience relative to staff recruitment and retention.
- (3) Describe the knowledge, experience and capabilities which the proposed project director and key project staff bring to the project. Discuss their capacity to manage and implement a project of this size, scope and complexity, including the development of training curriculum and the delivery of training necessary under the project design. Describe their knowledge, skills, capability, and experience in understanding child welfare work force issues, in identifying the knowledge and skill sets necessary to implement a program improvement plan, and in clarifying the relationship between training and service delivery. Include brief resumes of these staff. Describe the role, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors, and/or partners. Include a list of organizations and consultants who will work with the program along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.
- (4) Describe the relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated or underway with Federal assistance by the applicant.
- (5) Describe the management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality. The role and responsibilities of the lead agency should be clearly defined and, if appropriate, applicants should discuss the management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors and consultants.
- (6) Describe the role of the author of this proposal in the implementation of the proposed project.

CRITERION 4: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (10 Points)

- (1) Explain why the costs of the proposed project are reasonable, in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits. Discussion should refer to the budget information presented on Standard Forms 424 and 424A and the applicant's budget justification.
- (2) Describe fiscal control and accounting procedures which would be used to ensure prudent use and proper and timely disbursement and accurate accounting of funds received under this program announcement.
- (3) Allocate sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director or a key staff member, the project evaluator and a Representative of the state child welfare agency to attend an annual 3-day grantees' meeting in Washington, D.C., and to provide for the project director or a key staff member, the project evaluator and a Representative of the state child welfare agency to attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first three months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C. (Attendance at these meetings is a grant requirement.)

ASSURANCES: By signing the SF 424, the organization agrees to comply with the following:

- (1) The applicant will have the project fully functioning within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.
- (2) The applicant will participate if the Children's Bureau chooses to do a national evaluation or a technical assistance contract which relates to this priority area.
- (3) The project director or a key staff member, the project evaluator and a Representative of the state child welfare agency will attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first three months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C. and an annual three to five day meeting with the Children's Bureau staff in Washington, D.C.
- (4) All required reports will be submitted in a timely manner, in recommended formats (to be provided), and the final report will also be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program.

PROJECT DURATION: Awards will be made for a project period of 60 months. The initial grant will be for a 12-month budget period. The award of continuation funding beyond each 12-month period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the government.

FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS: The maximum Federal share of the project is up to \$200,000 per budget year. No application seeking Federal funding exceeding the amount noted will be accepted for review.

MATCHING OR COST SHARING REQUIREMENT: The grantee must provide at least 25 percent of the total approved cost of the project. The total approved cost is the sum of the Federal share and the non-Federal share. Therefore, a project requesting \$200,000 per budget period must include a match of at least \$66,667 per budget period. Applicants should provide a letter of commitment verifying the actual amount of the non-Federal share of project costs.

The following example shows how to calculate the required 25percent match amount for a \$200,000 grant:

	\$200,000	(Federal share)
divided by	.75	(100% - 25%)
equals	\$266,667	(total project cost including match)
minus	\$200,000	(federal share)
equals	\$66,667	(required 25% match)

The non-Federal share may be cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. If approved for funding, grantees will be held accountable for the commitment of non-Federal resources and failure to provide the required amount will result in a disallowance of unmatched Federal funds.

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED: It is estimated that up to thirteen projects will be funded.

LENGTH OF APPLICATION: The length of the application is limited to 50 pages, including all forms and attachments. Any pages over that number will be removed and will not be reviewed.

APPLICABLE GRANT REGULATIONS: Grants awarded under this program are subject to grant regulations under CFR Part 74 or 92.

CFDA NUMBER: 93.648

POST AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: All required reports must be submitted in a timely manner. Program progress reports must be submitted semi-annually. For example, for a project awarded by September 30, a semi-annual program progress report covering the period October through March and April through September is due for each year of the approved project period. A grantee is allowed 30 days to submit the report following the end of the six-month period. Recommended formats for the reports will be provided. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the project and will be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program. The financial reports (Form 269), both semi-annual and final, are also due on the same schedule as the program progress reports.

2003C.4: Training for Healthy Marriage and Family Formation

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Public or non-profit institutions of higher education with accredited social work programs or other accredited bachelor or graduate level programs leading to a degree relevant to work in child welfare.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this priority area is to develop, field test, revise, implement, evaluate, and disseminate a competency-based training curriculum and training plan to enhance frontline and/or supervisory child welfare staff capacity to address healthy marriage and family formation effectively as a means of achieving positive safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and families in the child welfare system.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

For many years, public and private organizations have offered parenting classes as a means of preventing child maltreatment, strengthening parents' knowledge and skills for raising healthy, well-adjusted children, and improving parent-child interactions. While many programs have focused on building the skills of parents in raising their children, few have focused on the skills parents need to form a family and promote or sustain a healthy marriage.

Under Child Welfare Training Priority Area 2003C.4: Healthy Marriage and Family Formation the Children's Bureau will fund projects that develop, field test, implement, evaluate, and disseminate competency-based training curricula to provide child welfare workers with a better understanding of and better tools for promoting healthy marriage and family formation. The curricula and training developed and provided under this priority area are designed to provide child welfare staff with a better knowledge of healthy marriage and family formation, including related research, best practices, models, resources, tools and techniques, and the capacity to recognize when marriage education is appropriate for the needs of clients. The curricula and training under this priority area will also equip child welfare staff with the right tools and knowledge to make appropriate referrals, evaluate and select sub-contractors for high quality services (if/when appropriate), and provide effective leadership on all these topics.

Research reveals that the benefits of healthy marriages for children are numerous. On average, children raised by parents in healthy marriages are less likely to fail at school, suffer an emotional or behavioral problem requiring psychiatric treatment, be victims of child abuse and neglect, get into trouble with the law, use illicit drugs, smoke cigarettes, abuse alcohol, engage in early and promiscuous sexual activity, grow up in poverty, or attempt suicide. On average, children raised by parents in healthy marriages are more likely to have a higher sense of self-esteem, form healthy marriages when they marry, attend college, and are physically healthier.

Healthy marriage education is a prevention strategy. Priority Area 2003C.4 will provide child welfare staff with an overview of the broad range of faith and community-based programs that focus on family formation and marriage education alone or in combination with parenting

education in an effort to work with parents to strengthen both their parenting and their relationship skills.

Marriage education is based on the premise that couples can learn how to build and maintain successful, stable marriages. The approach is based on research into what distinguishes marriages that succeed from those that fail. Research has found that it is not that successful couples have fewer conflicts, but rather that they are able to effectively handle their inevitable differences or disagreements.¹ Through marriage education, couples can learn how to do more of what makes marriages successful and less of what predicts marital unhappiness and breakdown. In addition to the skills that teach couples how to communicate more effectively, manage conflict, and work together as a team, many of these marriage education courses also teach the benefits that can be obtained from identifying expected challenges in relationships so that these challenges can be successfully negotiated when they arise. The numerous benefits obtained through marriage education work to strengthen families and protect the welfare and well-being of children and families.

REVIEW CRITERIA: The following specific criteria will be used to review and evaluate the applications in this priority area. The applicant should respond to each element listed under each criterion. It is strongly recommended that applicants organize their proposals around these criteria, so that reviewers can readily find information that directly addresses each of the specific review criteria. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

CRITERION 1: OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

- (1) Explain the need for a specific curriculum and training to strengthen child welfare staff competencies in the area of healthy marriage and family formation.
- (2) Describe the issues around healthy marriage and family formation faced by clients in the child welfare system and the child welfare intervention approaches which are appropriate to address these issues with this population.
- (3) State the goals and objectives of the proposed project. (Goals are herein defined as the end products of an effective project and objectives are defined as measurable steps for reaching these goals.)
- (4) Explain how the proposed project would enhance child welfare agency capacity to provide appropriate healthy marriage and family formation services through knowledge development, child welfare staff training, resource development activities, partnerships

¹ “Predicting Marital Happiness and Stability from Newlywed Interactions”, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*; Minneapolis; Feb 1998; John MGottman; James Coan; Sybil Carrere; Catherine Swanson

with community and faith-based based initiatives, and collaboration with other child and family serving agencies.

- (5) Explain how the proposed project would increase access to healthy marriage and family formation services through educational and public awareness campaigns and other means.
- (6) Explain how the proposed project would provide a better understanding of statutory, regulatory, administrative, policy, and resource barriers to healthy marriage and family formation in order to develop a strategy for overcoming such barriers.
- (7) Explain how the proposed project would assist States in developing an outreach strategy for promoting healthy marriage and family formation.
- (8) Explain how the proposed project would develop a strong university/child welfare agency partnership toward the goal of improving child welfare-related training and technical assistance to frontline workers and their supervisors.
- (9) Describe the results and benefits to be derived by developing, field testing, implementing, evaluating, and disseminating a training curriculum that is focused on healthy marriage and family formation practice.
- (10) Describe who the trainees would be and state how many public agency staff would be trained over the life of the project.
- (11) Explain how the lessons learned from the project would benefit policy, practice, and theory development in addressing the healthy marriage and family formation needs, issues, and crises of clients in the child welfare system.

CRITERION 2: APPROACH (50 Points)

- (1) Describe the timeline for implementing the proposed project, including major milestones and target dates. Projects are expected to complete the development, field testing, and revisions of the curriculum in a timely manner, so that there can be at least one year of training and a thorough evaluation of its effectiveness, within the 5 year project timeframe.
- (2) Describe the issues related to healthy marriage and family formation interventions. Explain the differences and similarities between these interventions and typical child welfare practice.
- (3) Explain how the proposed curriculum and training model would address these topics: relationship skill building, conflict resolution, marriage and the family, effective collaboration with community and faith-based resources with expertise in healthy marriage and family formation, and the role of a healthy marriage in rearing healthy children.
- (4) Describe the challenges of providing and improving training on healthy marriage and family formation within a public child welfare agency. Explain how the proposed project would overcome these challenges.

- (5) Explain how the proposed approach to developing a curriculum is based on a conceptual framework, research and practice experience. Specifically, describe how the proposed curriculum would build on, expand and strengthen the existing curriculum approaches/models for healthy marriage and family formation services.
- (6) Describe the applicable healthy marriage and family formation principles and the challenges to incorporating these principles within child welfare practices. Explain how the proposed project would overcome these challenges.
- (7) Describe the plan to ensure that the proposed curriculum development and training of staff would be culturally responsive to the diverse child welfare population.
- (8) Explain how the proposed curriculum would address the need for training child welfare workers in the areas of healthy marriage, family formation, and responsible fatherhood. Describe opportunities which would be provided for trainees to apply this knowledge.
- (9) Describe the criteria for selection and recruitment of child welfare agency trainees, and specific strategies which would be implemented for recruiting minority and Tribal agency trainees.
- (10) Describe the plan for field-testing the training curriculum. Explain how the effectiveness of the proposed competency-based curriculum would be field-tested and the curriculum modified, if necessary. Describe the location of the proposed field test and list the State/local/Tribal child welfare agencies have expressed committed to participate in the field-testing of the proposed curriculum. The application should include letters of commitment from these organizations.
- (11) Describe the evaluation strategy to measure the effectiveness of the competency-based curricula and training plan and its impact on improving child welfare practice and outcomes. Agencies that do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, comprehensive evaluation of the project are advised to contract with a third-party evaluator specializing in social science or evaluation, or a university or college to conduct the evaluation. If not using internal resources for project evaluation, describe the plan for securing an external evaluator.
- (12) Describe the plan for dissemination of the curriculum and project evaluation findings.
- (13) Describe the plan for continuing this project after the Federal funding expires.

CRITERION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES (20 Points)

- (1) Describe the applicant organization's capabilities and experience in training State public child welfare staff and in developing child welfare curricula. Discuss experience with and provide details of collaboration with State/Tribal child welfare agencies on training initiatives. If the application involves partnering and/or subcontracting with other agencies/organizations, then the application should include an organizational capability statement for each participating organization documenting the ability of the partners and/or subcontractors to fulfill their assigned roles and functions.
- (2) Describe the applicant organization's capabilities and experience relative to healthy marriage and family formation, community and faith-based services, children and families, and child welfare. Describe the organization's knowledge and experience in

training professionals for work with families, including an understanding of the demographics, culture, economics, and service delivery system.

- (3) Describe the knowledge, experience, and capabilities which the proposed project director and key project staff bring to the project. Discuss their background to manage a project of this size, scope, and complexity, including the development of training curriculum and provision of training services necessary under the project design. Include brief resumes of these staff. Describe the role, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors, and/or partners. Include a list of organizations and consultants who will work with the program along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.
- (4) Describe the relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated, or underway with Federal assistance by the applicant.
- (5) Describe the management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality. The role and responsibilities of the lead agency should be clearly defined and, if appropriate, applicants should discuss the management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors, and consultants.
- (6) Describe the role of the author of this proposal in the implementation of the proposed project.

CRITERION 4: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (10 Points)

- (1) Explain why the costs of the proposed project are reasonable, in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits. Discussion should refer to the budget information presented on Standard Forms 424 and 424A and the applicant's budget justification.
- (2) Describe the fiscal control and accounting procedures which would be used to ensure prudent use and proper and timely disbursement and accurate accounting of funds received under this program announcement.
- (3) Allocate sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director or other key project staff, the project evaluator and a representative of the State child welfare agency to attend an annual 3-day grantees' meeting in Washington, D.C., and to provide for the project director or other key project staff, the project evaluator and a Representative of the state child welfare agency to attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first three months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C. (Attendance at these meetings is a grant requirement.)

ASSURANCES: By signing the SF 424, the organization agrees to comply with the following:

- (1) The applicant will have the project fully functioning within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.
- (2) The applicant will participate if the Children's Bureau chooses to do a national evaluation or a technical assistance contract that relates to this priority area.
- (3) The project director or other key project staff, the project evaluator and a Representative of the state child welfare agency will attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first three months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C. and an annual three to five day meeting with the Children's Bureau staff in Washington, D.C.
- (4) All required reports will be submitted in a timely manner, in recommended formats (to be provided), and the final report will also be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program.

PROJECT DURATION: Awards will be made for a project period of 60 months. The initial grant will be for a 12-month budget period. The award of continuation funding beyond each 12-month period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the government.

FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS: The maximum Federal share of the project is up to \$200,000 per budget year. No application seeking Federal funding exceeding the amount noted will be accepted for review.

MATCHING OR COST SHARING REQUIREMENT: The grantee must provide at least 25 percent of the total approved cost of the project. The total approved cost is the sum of the Federal share and the non-Federal share. Therefore, a project requesting \$200,000 per budget period must include a match of at least \$66,667 per budget period. Applicants should provide a letter of commitment verifying the actual amount of the non-Federal share of project costs.

The following example shows how to calculate the required 25 percent match amount for a \$200,000 grant:

	\$200,000	(Federal share)
divided by	.75	(100% - 25%)
equals	\$266,667	(total project cost including match)
minus	\$200,000	(federal share)
equals	\$66,667	(required 25% match)

The non-Federal share may be cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. If approved for funding, grantees will be held accountable for the commitment of non-Federal resources and failure to provide the required amount will result in a disallowance of unmatched Federal funds.

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED: It is estimated that up to eight projects will be funded.

LENGTH OF APPLICATION: The length of the application is limited to 50 pages, including all forms and attachments. Any pages over that number will be removed and will not be reviewed.

APPLICABLE GRANT REGULATIONS: Grants awarded under this program are subject to grant regulations under CFR Part 74 or 92.

CFDA NUMBER: 93.648

POST AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: All required reports must be submitted in a timely manner. Program progress reports must be submitted semi-annually. For example, for a project awarded by September 30, a semi-annual program progress report covering the period October through March and April through September is due for each year of the approved project period. A grantee is allowed 30 days to submit the report following the end of the six-month period. Recommended formats for the reports will be provided. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the project and will be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program. The financial reports (Form 269), both semi-annual and final, are also due on the same schedule as the program progress reports.

2003C.5 National Evaluation of Child Welfare Training Grants

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Public or non-profit institutions of higher education with accredited social work education programs or other accredited bachelor or graduate level programs leading to a degree relevant to work in child welfare. To be eligible, the institution must demonstrate knowledge and skills in the areas of child welfare administration, research, evaluation, and curriculum development and implementation.

PURPOSE: To evaluate the Child Welfare Training (CWT) program by evaluating a set of nine projects from the cluster of twelve projects that was funded for a three-year period under the Children's Bureau priority area 2000C.1: Training of Child Welfare Practitioners to Work Effectively with Youth Transitioning Out of Foster Care through the Federal Independent Living Program (ILP).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The Children's Bureau has a long history of awarding grants for child welfare training. While these grants have frequently been evaluated individually, the Children's Bureau now proposes to fund an independent, multi-site evaluation of a set of CWT projects to explore the effectiveness of the program and to capture, at the multi-site level, lessons learned and best practices. The particular cluster of CWT projects chosen for this evaluation focuses on training child welfare practitioners to work effectively with youth transitioning out of foster care through the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP), or ILP as it was titled in FY 2000.

The Children's Bureau believes that CWT is an effective way to improve both child welfare practice and child welfare client outcomes and is interested in a post hoc evaluation of the impact of CWT. Under priority area 2003C.5, the Children's Bureau proposes to fund a study of the impact and effectiveness of a group of CWT projects. The successful applicant under this priority area will select nine projects to participate in this evaluation, elicit their voluntary cooperation and participation, and work with them in a positive, collaborative relationship. The evaluation is intended to answer questions such as: How well does the current Children's Bureau CWT grant system work? What impact do CWT curricula have on the field, on schools of social work and on professional development through state "academies?" Other questions of interest at the multi-site level include but are not limited to: Do the grantees continue to update and upgrade the curricula beyond the period of Federal funding? Is training continued beyond the period of Federal funding? Does training from these funded curricula improve practice and lead to better outcomes for children and families? How satisfied are States/Tribes and trainees with the curriculum and training? How did the projects affect the relationships between the grantees and the State/Tribal child welfare system? How informative were their evaluations and final reports? What was the evidence regarding the effectiveness of training? Is training, as an activity funded by the Federal government, an effective way to promote change in practice and improve outcomes for clients? Is curriculum development and training cost effective to the desired benefits (how many workers were trained, how much did they learn, how much did their behavior change, were there better outcomes for clients)? The findings from the multi-site

evaluation should include evidence-based recommendations for improvements in the CWT program.

The cluster of CWT grantees selected for evaluation under this priority area are the twelve projects that were funded for a three-year period under the Children's Bureau priority area 2000C.1: Training of Child Welfare Practitioners to Work Effectively with Youth Transitioning Out of Foster Care through the Federal Independent Living Program (ILP). In 2000, the Children's Bureau, recognizing the need for service providers to receive training so they could provide specialized, age-appropriate support for these youth as they transition to adulthood, awarded twelve grants under the priority area. The purpose of the priority area was to develop and evaluate a competency-based training curriculum to strengthen public child welfare agency staffs' intervention skills for working with older youth in foster care and/or in independent living programs. These youth, ages 16 to 21, need assistance in making a successful transition to adulthood, as well as help in avoiding long-term dependency on the social welfare system.

At that time, training of child welfare workers had predominantly focused on working with the adult members of the youth's family or caretaker rather than working with the youth, regarding his/her experiences, needs and crisis situations. Most of the work was done in the context of family-centered services that build on family strengths and meet family needs. There had been limited attention given to assessing developmental needs or problem situations from the youth's perspective and preparing youth for independence and/or transitioning out of foster care.

Specialized skills are essential to work effectively with older youth. Child welfare staff needed training to understand youth development principles and strategies, to focus on giving young people age-appropriate opportunities to exercise leadership, build skills, and become involved in decision-making about their future. The knowledge and skills development curriculum was required to include an understanding of the youth development philosophy, as well as client assessment, age-appropriate intervention planning, implementation and evaluation of individualized IL training and program activities leading to increased education attainment, higher employment rates and stability, greater interpersonal and daily living skills, securing and maintaining housing, reduced non-marital pregnancy and births, reduced delinquency and crime rates and decrease substance abuse. The training based on the curriculum was expected to increase line staff ability to: 1) assess a youth's readiness for IL training; 2) identify needed IL program services and activities; 3) utilize a working knowledge of youth development principles as a basis for involving youth in the decision-making, implementation and evaluation of training and program activities designed to support a successful transition to self sufficiency; 4) identify areas of stress and the impact on youth in foster care; and 5) work with youth to help them deal with crisis situations and to assess the results of the intervention. Each funded project and its related tasks had to be coordinated with: 1) the State, Tribal and/or local child welfare agency where the training curriculum will be field-tested for its effectiveness in building the skills necessary for improving services to youth in placement; 2) and the National Resource Center for Youth Services in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

While the project funded under priority area 2003C.5 will be evaluating a cluster of CWT projects that focused on Independent Living, applicants are expected to conduct their evaluations and report their findings in such a way as to have relevance to all future projects funded under the CWT program regardless of their focus.

NOTE: This program announcement seeks a grantee to enter into a Cooperative Agreement with the Children's Bureau to fulfill the purposes of this grant. A Cooperative Agreement is Federal Assistance in which substantial Federal involvement is anticipated. Under a Cooperative Agreement the respective responsibilities of Federal staff and the awardee are negotiated prior to award. The awardee will be required to submit to the Children's Bureau for review and approval prior to finalization and dissemination: work plans, criteria for site selection, the evaluation methodology, plans for or actual resource lists, syntheses, summaries or literature reviews to be disseminated; and draft reports, training agendas, newsletters, and other materials as appropriate.

REVIEW CRITERIA: The following specific criteria will be used to review and evaluate the applications in this priority area. The applicant should answer each question listed under each criterion. It is strongly recommended that applicants organize their proposals around these criteria, so that reviewers can readily find information that directly addresses each of the specific review criteria. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

CRITERION 1: OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

- (1) Explain the need to evaluate the Child Welfare Training grant program (CWT) in general.
- (2) State the goals and objectives of the proposed project. (Goals are herein defined as the end products of an effective project and objectives are defined as measurable steps for reaching these goals.)
- (3) Explain how the proposed project would address the issues and answer the questions posed in the Background Information section of this priority area.
- (4) Explain how the proposed project would lead to improved Child Welfare Training practice.
- (5) Explain how the proposed project would enhance university/child welfare agency partnerships toward the goal of improving training for child welfare agency staff.
- (6) Describe the results and benefits to be derived from evaluating this particular group of child welfare training projects.

CRITERION 2: APPROACH (50 Points)

- (1) Describe the timeline for implementing the proposed project, including major milestones and target dates.
- (2) Describe the issues related to child welfare staff training in general, and additional issues specifically related to independent living training. Explain how this evaluation project would deal with these issues.
- (3) Describe the goals and objectives of the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) and of the CFCIP CWT programs.
- (4) Describe the challenges of evaluating these child welfare training projects and explain how the proposed evaluation project would overcome these challenges.
- (5) Explain how the proposed evaluation is based on a conceptual framework, research and practice experience.
- (6) Explain how the proposed evaluation application uses a logic model to illustrate the links between the data the applicant intends to collect and the intended outcomes of this evaluation project.
- (7) Explain how this evaluation project propose to explore the extent to which the long-term child welfare client outcomes described in the Background section of this priority area are occurring (and/or are likely to occur) as a result of this cluster of CWT projects.
- (8) Explain how this project would build a foundation upon which future longitudinal client outcome studies could be based.
- (9) Describe the applicable evaluation principles, and the challenges to incorporating these principles within the evaluation of child welfare training for independent living. Explain how the proposed project would overcome these challenges.
- (10) Describe the criteria for selection and recruitment of the nine projects, from the pool of twelve, to be evaluated; the specific strategies which would be employed to ensure a representative sample; how the applicant would secure their voluntary cooperation and participation; what strategies would be employed to establish and maintain a positive collaborative relationship between the applicant and the nine projects being evaluated; and what assurance there is that the projects selected for evaluation would participate as needed. (There are 12 eligible grantees but only 9 may be selected. They are geographically dispersed. Applicants should not contact grantees prior to submitting their applications. Evidence of contact with grantees by applicants will result in removal from the competition for funds.)
- (11) Describe data sources which would be utilized, and tools and techniques which would be used for collecting data. Explain how the data would be managed, how its integrity would be assured, how the data would be analyzed and interpreted, and how the results would be reported so that they are readily accessible and useful to key audiences.
- (12) Describe the plan for ensuring compliance with all Departmental regulations and procedures pertaining to confidentiality and careful handling of information on individuals, families and evaluation data, and obtaining informed consent from participants.

- (13) Describe the applicant's plan for bringing the Project Director, Project Evaluator, and the Liaison of the nine projects to be evaluated together for an early kick off meeting in Washington, D.C. Include information such as when this meeting would occur, what the goals of this meeting would be, and how these goals would be met.
- (14) Describe the plan for utilizing the evaluation data that has already been collected by the grantees.
- (15) Describe the evaluation strategy to measure the effectiveness of the curricula and training plans in increasing child welfare worker knowledge and improving their practice.
- (16) Describe the plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the curricula and training plans in improving outcomes for youth in transition.
- (17) Describe the plan for distinguishing how much of the effect is due to the quality of the curriculum and how much is due to the skill of the trainer presenting the material.
- (18) Describe the plan for identifying the key components and strategies which are most closely correlated with desired results, and the plan for summarizing and reporting this information in a positive manner which is specific enough to be useful for improving CWT, without casting any of the participating projects in a negative light.
- (19) Describe the plan for dissemination of the evaluation findings.

CRITERION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES (20 Points)

- (1) Describe the applicant organization's capabilities and experience relative to evaluating curricula for and the training of State public child welfare staff. Discuss experience with and provide details of collaboration with Universities and State/Tribal child welfare agencies on training and evaluation initiatives. If the application involves partnering and/or subcontracting with other agencies/organizations, then the application should include an organizational capability statement for each participating organization documenting the ability of the partners and/or subcontractors to fulfill their assigned roles and functions.
- (2) Describe relevant knowledge, experience, and capabilities which the proposed project director and key project staff bring to the project. Discuss their background to manage a project of this size, scope, and complexity, including the evaluation of curricula and training necessary under the project design. Include brief resumes of these staff. Describe the role, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors and/or partners. Include a list of organizations and consultants who will work with the program along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.
- (3) Describe the relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated or underway with Federal assistance by the applicant.
- (4) Describe the management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality. The role and responsibilities of the lead agency should be clearly defined and, if appropriate,

applicants should discuss the management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors, and consultants.

CRITERION 4: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (10 Points)

- (1) Explain why the costs of the proposed project are reasonable, in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits. Discussion should refer to the budget information presented on Standard Forms 424 and 424A and the applicant's budget justification.
- (2) Describe the fiscal control and accounting procedures which would be used to ensure prudent use and proper and timely disbursement and accurate accounting of funds received under this program announcement.
- (3) Allocate sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director and the evaluator to attend an annual three-day grantees' meeting in Washington, D.C. and to provide for the project director, the evaluator and three representatives from each of the nine projects being evaluated to attend an early kick-off meeting to be held within the first six months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C. (Attendance at these meetings is a grant requirement.)
- (4) Include sufficient funds to make site visits as needed to all nine sites.

ASSURANCES: By signing the SF 424, the organization agrees to comply with the following:

- (1) The applicant will have the project fully functioning within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.
- (2) The applicant will participate if the Children's Bureau chooses to do a national evaluation or a technical assistance contract which relates to this priority area.
- (3) The project director or a key staff member, the project evaluator and a representative of each of the nine CWT projects to be evaluated will attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first six months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C. The project director will also attend an annual three to five day meeting with the Children's Bureau staff in Washington, D.C.
- (4) All required reports will be submitted in a timely manner, in recommended formats (to be provided), and the final report will also be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program.
- (5) Additional studies may be under way or undertaken by States, foundations or others which may bear upon the topic of child welfare training in general and on independent living in particular. The applicant will be prepared to cooperate in the exchange of information and coordination of efforts with other identified contractors (including the possibility of coordinated technical work group meetings and conferences) to minimize the burden on participants.
- (6) Advance review for dissemination of project information prior to contract completion: The applicant agrees not to release or disclose, verbally or in writing, information pertaining to the results of findings of work (including data collection, analyses, draft or

final papers and reports) for the period of this grant without prior review and approval by the Government Project Officer.

PROJECT DURATION: Awards will be made for a project period of 36 months. The initial grant will be for a 12-month budget period. The award of continuation funding beyond each 12-month period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the government.

FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS: The maximum Federal share of the project is \$350,000 per budget year. No application seeking Federal funding exceeding the amount noted will be accepted for review.

MATCHING OR COST SHARING REQUIREMENT: No match required.

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED: It is anticipated that one project will be funded.

LENGTH OF APPLICATION: The length of the application is limited to 50 pages, including all forms and attachments. Any pages over that number will be removed and will not be reviewed.

APPLICABLE GRANT REGULATIONS: Grants awarded under this program are subject to grant regulations under CFR Part 74 or 92.

CFDA NUMBER: 93.648

POST AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: All required reports must be submitted in a timely manner. Program progress reports must be submitted semi-annually. For example, for a project awarded by September 30, a semi-annual program progress report covering the period October through March and April through September is due for each year of the approved project period. A grantee is allowed 30 days to submit the report following the end of the six-month period. Recommended formats for the reports will be provided. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the project and will be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program. The financial reports (Form 269), both semi-annual and final, are also due on the same schedule as the program progress reports.

2003D: Promoting Safe and Stable Families Activities

The **Promoting Safe and Stable Families** program (title IV-B, Subpart 2, of the Social Security Act) provides funds to enable States and eligible Tribes to develop, establish, expand, or operate coordinated programs of community-based family support services, family preservation services, time-limited family reunification services, and adoption promotion and support services. Priority Area D.3 primarily addresses evaluations of programs for these topics. Each of these four service areas is defined in statute as follows:

Family Support Services: The term "family support services" means community-based services to promote the safety and well-being of children and families designed to increase the strength and stability of families (including adoptive, foster, and extended families), to increase parents' confidence and competence in their parenting abilities, to afford children a safe, stable and supportive family environment, to strengthen parental relationships and promote healthy marriages, and otherwise to enhance child development.

Family Preservation Services: The term "family preservation services" means services for children and families designed to help families (including adoptive and extended families) at risk or in crisis, including--

- (A) service programs designed to help children--
 - (i) where safe and appropriate, return to families from which they have been removed; or
 - (ii) be placed for adoption, with a legal guardian, or, if adoption or legal guardianship is determined not to be safe and appropriate for a child, in some other planned, permanent living arrangement;
- (B) pre-placement preventive services programs, such as intensive family preservation programs, designed to help children at risk of foster care placement remain safely with their families;
- (C) service programs designed to provide follow up care to families to whom a child has been returned after a foster care placement;
- (D) respite care of children to provide temporary relief for parents and other caregivers (including foster parents);
- (E) services designed to improve parenting skills (by reinforcing parents' confidence in their strengths, and helping them to identify where improvement is needed and to obtain assistance in improving those skills) with respect to matters such as child development, family budgeting, coping with stress, health, and nutrition; and
- (F) infant safe haven programs to provide a way for a parent to safely relinquish a newborn infant at a safe haven designated pursuant to a State law.

Time-Limited Family Reunification Services: The term "time-limited family reunification services" means services and activities (described below) that are provided

to a child that is removed from the child's home and placed in a foster family home or a child care institution and to the parents or primary caregiver of such a child, in order to facilitate the reunification of the child safely and appropriately within a timely fashion, but only during the 15-month period that begins on the date that the child is considered to have entered foster care. The services and activities described in this subparagraph are the following:

- (A) Individual, group, and family counseling.
- (B) Inpatient, residential, or outpatient substance abuse treatment services.
- (C) Mental health services.
- (D) Assistance to address domestic violence.
- (E) Services designed to provide temporary child care and therapeutic services for families, including crisis nurseries.
- (F) Transportation to or from any of the services and activities described in this subparagraph.

Adoption Promotion And Support Services: The term “adoption promotion and support services” means services and activities designed to encourage more adoptions out of the foster care system, when adoptions promote the best interests of children, including such activities as pre- and post-adoptive services and activities designed to expedite the adoption process and support adoptive families.

Child abuse and neglect is a problem that impacts every community. Based on data collected through the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS), child protective service agencies received about three million referrals of possible maltreatment in 2000. Of these, approximately 879,000 cases were substantiated after investigation. Almost two-thirds (62 percent) of these children suffered neglect; 19 percent were physically abused; 10 percent were sexually abused and 8 percent were psychologically maltreated. The rate of child victims per 1,000 children in the population has been decreasing steadily since 1993 when there were 15.3 victims per 1,000 children. In 2000, consistent with previous years, 84 percent of victims were abused by a parent or parents. Mothers acting alone were responsible for 47 percent of the neglect and 32 percent of the physical abuse. Non-relatives, fathers acting alone, and other relatives were responsible for 29 percent, 22 percent and 19 percent, respectively, of the sexual abuse. Approximately 1,200 children died of abuse or neglect, a rate of 1.71 children per 100,000 children in the population.

Prevention is a major initiative of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Priority Areas D.1 and D.2 primarily address child maltreatment prevention. As part of this effort, the Children’s Bureau, Office on Child Abuse and Neglect (OCAN) has launched a Child Abuse Prevention Initiative to promote greater visibility for child abuse prevention activities in 2003-2004. The *Emerging Practices in the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect* project is one important component of this Initiative. In response to the need to share information about promising practices in child abuse and neglect prevention, the Children’s Bureau embarked on the *Emerging Practices* project to describe the current landscape of prevention programs and

collect information about effective and innovative prevention programs. A national nomination process was completed in 2002. While several strategies and features of child abuse prevention programs were identified as holding promise for reducing the incidence of child maltreatment, the results of the nomination process also indicated that more support is needed to develop a stronger evidence-base for promising program strategies. (To obtain a copy of the final report, visit <http://www.calib.com/nccanch/prevention>.) As part of the Prevention Initiative, the Children's Bureau plans to invest a portion of discretionary funds over the next five years to build the knowledge for advancing theory, policy and evidence-based practice in child abuse prevention.

The review of the literature from the *Emerging Practices* report on the efficacy of prevention in the field of child maltreatment has highlighted some promising strategies, ongoing implementation challenges, and clear knowledge gaps. It is evident that more research is needed in these areas.

Home visitation programs have proliferated across the country in response to some early promising results in a few rigorously evaluated programs. Some of these programs have noted improvements in family functioning and wellness, thereby reducing the risks faced by children. In addition, some home visitation programs have demonstrated a capacity to actually reduce the incidence of child physical abuse and neglect. However, researchers have also cautioned that home visiting is not a panacea to child maltreatment. Many of the programs studied also noted struggles in enrolling, engaging, and retaining families. The same concerns have been raised about the type of staff credentials and training needed by home visitors. When program benefits were demonstrated, this impacted only a subset of families, and benefits were rarely seen across all the program goals. A significant amount has been learned about the conditions that are necessary for such programs, and the families they serve, to succeed. However, many researchers caution that there are still inherent limitations to home visiting programs and replications of any model present numerous challenges.

The record for parent education programs, which strive to increase family wellness by improving the knowledge and skills of parents, is neither rich nor, on the whole, particularly compelling. Though numerous studies of parent education programs have demonstrated positive findings, these findings have largely been limited to short-term gains among participants in parenting knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Programs for children and parents that are designed to raise awareness about child sexual abuse are another area where there has been a recent and relatively concentrated research focus. Available research suggests that such programs, like parent education programs, can be successful at imparting information and changing behavior, but there is little evidence to conclude that these programs actually prevent child sexual abuse. Though a few very recent studies have examined the relationship between knowledge/behavior and subsequent incidence of maltreatment, leading to some encouraging findings, these studies have been idiosyncratic and the results, therefore, are not widely generalized.

Very little is known about the effectiveness of universal initiatives that seek to prevent maltreatment by raising public awareness. Measurement of the effectiveness of these initiatives faces its own unique complexities. In the particular area of shaken baby syndrome, for example, understanding among medical professionals of the constellation of injuries that constitutes the syndrome continues to progress, steadily increasing the reliability of the diagnosis. There is currently no national mechanism for counting such cases, however, so the true incidence of the syndrome is not well understood. Until national data are available, evidence of the effectiveness of initiatives to prevent the syndrome will continue to be elusive.

Finally, little is known about the vast array of other kinds of family support programs that also have the goal of preventing child abuse and neglect, including respite care, mutual parent support, family resource centers, and media campaigns. These programs may target the general population with the goal of facilitating prevention through increased awareness and family strengthening and/or they may target specific populations believed to be at increased risk for child maltreatment with the goal of enhancing protective factors and/or reducing the factors which are placing them at risk.

The issue of *statistical* versus *clinical* significance is an important one. Many of the studies report findings of statistically significant differences between “treatment” and comparison groups on selected measures. The question to be asked, however, is whether observed differences in short-term knowledge gains are meaningful in terms of actually protecting children, (i.e., Are the knowledge gains correlated with fewer actual abuse incidents?) Taken as a whole, more research is needed to understand the impact of prevention programs on child maltreatment over the long term.

2003 D.1 Replication of Demonstrated Effective Programs in the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Public or private non-profit organizations including community and faith-based organizations, and institutions of higher education. Collaborative efforts and interdisciplinary applications are acceptable, however applications from collaborations must identify a primary applicant responsible for administering the grant.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this priority area is to provide financial support to replicate and evaluate critical components of programs that have been previously demonstrated to be successful at preventing or reducing the risk of child maltreatment, testing their effectiveness in other settings. Applicants may choose to replicate a demonstrated effective program identified through the *Emerging Practices in the Prevention of Child Abuse or Neglect* project or select another program of equal merit. The projects funded under this priority area will incorporate features and components that hold promise for contributing to an expansion of the knowledge base about effective strategies in child abuse and neglect prevention.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Although there is now a considerable body of research which identifies various risk and protective factors for child maltreatment, information about successful approaches to the prevention of child abuse and neglect has only recently become available. There is a growing body of research on the benefits of well-designed and well-administered home visiting programs for both children and parents. School-based child sexual abuse prevention programs and parent education programs have also experienced a relatively concentrated research focus, and while some positive effects have been found, the results are not conclusive. Unfortunately little is known about the vast array of other kinds of family support programs that also have the goal of preventing child abuse and neglect, such as respite care, mutual parent support, family resource centers, and media campaigns.

In response to the need to share information about promising practices in child abuse and neglect prevention, the Children's Bureau, Office on Child Abuse and Neglect embarked on the *Emerging Practices* project to describe the current landscape of prevention programs and collect information about effective and innovative prevention programs. Through a national nomination process that was completed in 2002, several strategies and features of child abuse prevention programs were identified as holding promise for reducing the incidence of child maltreatment. While many excellent programs were nominated, only one program which was submitted to the *Emerging Practices* project was determined to have the features required for inclusion in the category, "Demonstrated Effective." This program conducted an evaluation that demonstrated its effectiveness at increasing protective factors and reducing risk factors for child neglect. (To obtain a copy of the report, visit <http://www.calib.com/nccanch/prevention>.) The program shares many of the same elements of other well-known program models. This particular program promotes the safety and well being of children and families with family and community services, incorporates professional education and training, and is supported by integrated research and evaluation activities. It is an early intervention, psychosocial service, community-based, neglect

prevention program for families who are having significant difficulty meeting the needs of their children. The program was designed around a set of practice principles, which evolved from what the previous research has found to work best with vulnerable families. Evaluation results have suggested that this program improves parenting skills, reduces parental depression, and reduces children's behavioral problems. These factors are known to have a relationship to safety, recidivism, and maltreatment risk.

Some examples of essential elements of a demonstrated effective program, which may be replicated under this priority area, include:

- (1) Quickly identifying informal support systems and contacting potential resources that can meet each family's identified needs (e.g. no food, utility turn off, eviction notice, etc.), and then guiding and encouraging clients in taking the necessary steps to access help.
- (2) Making multiple contacts with various family and support system members, both individually and in combination, in a range of settings during the first 30 days of service to get an accurate picture of the intra-psychic, interpersonal, familial, neighborhood and community strengths and needs. This may include the use of standardized assessment tools.
- (3) Developing a mutually negotiated service plan that operationally defines outcomes, goals, and objectives for action steps that will increase family capacities and reduce risk of abuse and/or neglect.
- (4) Providing a combination of home and community based crisis intervention, problem solving, and cognitive behavioral strategies with individuals, families, and groups. These interventions build on family strengths while concomitantly addressing concrete and dynamic family functioning issues.
- (5) Identifying and connecting with a broad network of community resources that enable staff to assist families in meeting needs that threaten healthy family functioning.
- (6) Creating opportunities for caregivers and their children to experience positive and enjoyable interactions with each other and their peers; to begin or continue to develop a support network that reflects and affirms each caregiver's commitment to build a stronger, healthier family; and to further expand the perception of community (e.g., by visiting family-friendly area attractions together.)

Applications for grants under this priority area must explain why a particular program was chosen for replication, describe the program and its key components in detail and include strong evidence that the program has been rigorously evaluated and shown to be effective in preventing child abuse and/or neglect. In addition, applicants are strongly encouraged to include plans for conducting cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analyses of the model. Factors that may be considered in this analysis may include, but are not limited to, staff caseloads, supervisor to worker ratios, cost per family or unit of service, training, consultation costs and the value of the benefits derived to the treatment costs avoided. Applicants must propose to serve a reasonable number of children and families in their replication to allow for a sample of sufficient size to demonstrate meaningful positive outcomes from the program.

NOTE: This program announcement seeks a grantee to enter into a Cooperative Agreement with the Children’s Bureau to fulfill the purposes of this grant. A Cooperative Agreement is Federal Assistance in which substantial Federal involvement is anticipated. Under a Cooperative Agreement the respective responsibilities of Federal staff and the awardee are negotiated prior to award. The awardee will be required to submit to the Children’s Bureau for review and approval prior to finalization and dissemination: work plans, topics to be covered in technical assistance, plans for or actual resource lists, syntheses, summaries or literature reviews to be disseminated within the networks; and draft reports, training agendas and other materials as appropriate.

A unique feature of this priority area is that the first year of these projects is to be used for planning. As a part of their proposal, applicants are required to describe a strategy for a 12-month planning phase for the development of the replication project to be followed by a 48-month implementation phase. Additionally, 10 months after the initial award, the grantees will be required to submit an Implementation Plan to the Children’s Bureau for review and approval before they can move forward. One month after submitting the Implementation Plan to the Children’s Bureau, the grantees will be required to submit a revised implementation plan incorporating recommendations of the Children’s Bureau staff. This plan will be subject to further review and approval by the Children’s Bureau prior to continuation funding.

NOTE: Activities funded under this priority area are demonstration projects. See Section I for more information on preparing a successful demonstration project application.

REVIEW CRITERIA: The following specific criteria will be used to review and evaluate the applications in this priority area. The applicant should respond to each element listed under each criterion. It is strongly recommended that applicants organize their proposals around these criteria, so that reviewers can readily find information that directly addresses each of the specific review criteria. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

CRITERION 1: OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

- (1) State the goals and objectives of the proposed project. (Goals are herein defined as the end products of an effective project and objectives are defined as measurable steps for reaching these goals.)
- (2) Describe the program which will be replicated and its key components. Summarize the evidence that this approach has been demonstrated to be effective for increasing protective factors and/or reducing the risk factors for child abuse and/or neglect.
- (3) Describe the results and benefits to be derived from this project.
- (4) Describe the context of the proposed demonstration project, including the geographic location, environment, magnitude and severity of the problems, and the needs to be addressed.

- (5) Describe contextual factors which might facilitate or hinder the implementation of the proposed project, and opportunities and barriers which might arise in its design and implementation. Explain how the project would address these issues.
- (6) Describe the target population for the proposed project and explain how the proposed project responds to needs of this target population.
- (7) Explain how this project would improve evidence-based practices to prevent child maltreatment. Applicants should present a concise summary of the literature that reflects an understanding of the research on best practices and promising approaches in the child abuse and neglect prevention field.

CRITERION 2: APPROACH (50 Points)

- (1) Describe the timeline for implementing the proposed project, including major milestones and target dates.
- (2) Describe the issues related to program fidelity and replication in general, and additional issues for replicating this particular program in this particular community with this particular target population. Explain how the proposed project would address these issues.
- (3) Describe the plan for working with the original program. It is anticipated that the original program will serve as a mentor to the successful applicant during the planning, implementation and evaluation of the replication program. Describe the proposed relationship between the applicant and the mentor site, how the applicant would receive technical assistance from the mentor site and how the mentor site would be compensated. Describe the first year planning process: meetings with the mentor; assessing the similarities between the original program and the replication program's situation in terms of community, environment and target population; working with the mentor to minimally adapt the model while maintaining maximum fidelity of the original program to the new situation and maintaining the integrity of the key components, developing and implementing an evaluation plan, and making mid-project adjustments. Applications should include a letter of agreement between the applicant and the program to be replicated signed by both. This letter should describe the proposed relationship between the applicant and the program to be replicated, list the roles and responsibilities of both partners and express commitment to participate together if the proposal is funded.
- (4) Describe the plan to ensure that the project will be culturally responsive to the target population.
- (5) Describe the logic model for this project. Explain how it demonstrates strong links between proposed inputs and activities, and intended short-term and long-term outcomes, and how the achievement of these outcomes would be measured. (See Section I of this application package for more information on logic models.)
- (6) Describe the plan for utilizing the evaluation model, existing data and evaluation expertise of the program that is to be replicated.

- (7) Explain how the proposed project's evaluation plan would include the collection of information and data to determine the extent to which the new program is replicating the key components of the original program and the extent to which the new program is producing the same outcomes as the original program. Agencies that do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, comprehensive evaluation of the project are advised to contract with a third-party evaluator specializing in social science or evaluation, or a university or college to conduct the evaluation. If not using internal resources for project evaluation, describe the plan for securing an external evaluator.
- (8) Describe the plan for evaluating the cost-effectiveness or cost-benefits of the proposed replication. List the factors which would be considered in this analysis. Describe the plan for comparing the replication site to the original program with respect to these factors.
- (9) Describe the data which would be collected on individuals and families; types of services provided, service utilization, achievement of project objectives, and types and nature of needs met. Explain how this data would be collected, managed and analyzed.
- (10) If the project involves partnerships with additional agencies or organizations, describe the roles and responsibilities of each partner. These should be clearly specified.
- (11) Describe the plan for continuing this project beyond the period of Federal funding.
- (12) Describe the plan for ensuring compliance with all Departmental regulations and procedures pertaining to confidentiality and careful handling of information on individuals, families and evaluation data, and obtaining informed consent from participants, and your plans regarding an Institutional Review Board (IRB) review, if applicable.
- (13) Describe the plan for summarizing, reporting and disseminating the best practices, lessons learned and evaluation findings to key audiences.

CRITERION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES (20 Points)

- (1) Describe the applicant organization's capabilities and experience relative to this project. Discuss experience with and provide details of administration, replication, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of similar projects. If the application involves partnering and/or subcontracting with other agencies/organizations, then the application should include an organizational capability statement for each participating organization documenting the ability of the partners and/or subcontractors to fulfill their assigned roles and functions.
- (2) Describe the organization's capabilities and experience relative to programs for the prevention of child abuse and neglect.
- (3) Describe the relevant knowledge, experience and capabilities which the proposed project director and key project staff bring to the project. Discuss their background to manage and implement a project of this size, scope and complexity. Include brief resumes of these staff. Describe the role, responsibilities and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors and/or partners.

Include a list of organizations and consultants who will work with the program along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

- (4) Describe the mentoring capabilities and experience of the organization and staff of the project which is to be replicated.
- (5) Describe the relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated or underway with Federal assistance by the applicant.
- (6) Describe the management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality. The role and responsibilities of the lead agency should be clearly defined and, if appropriate, applicants should discuss the management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors and consultants.
- (7) Describe the role of the author of this proposal in the implementation of the proposed project.

CRITERION 4: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (10 Points)

- (1) Explain why the costs of the proposed project are reasonable, in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits. Discussion should refer to the budget information presented on Standard Forms 424 and 424A and the applicant's budget justification.
- (2) Describe the fiscal control and accounting procedures which would be used to ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement and accurate accounting of funds received under this program announcement.
- (3) Allocate sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director, the evaluator and a representative of the program being replicated to attend an annual three-day grantees' meeting in Washington, D.C., and to provide for the project director, the evaluator and a representative of the program being replicated to attend an early kick-off meeting to be held within the first six months of the project (first year only) in Washington, DC. (Attendance at these meetings is a grant requirement.)
- (4) Allocate 10-15% of the budget for evaluation of the project.

ASSURANCES: By signing the SF 424, the organization agrees to comply with the following:

- (1) The applicant will have the project fully functioning with respect to the required planning year activities within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.
- (2) Ten months after the initial award, the grantee will submit an Implementation Plan to the Children's Bureau for review and approval before they can move forward. One month after submitting the Implementation Plan to the Children's Bureau, the grantees will be required to submit a revised implementation plan incorporating recommendations of the Children's Bureau staff. This plan will be subject to further review and approval by the Children's Bureau prior to continuation funding.
- (3) The applicant will participate if the Children's Bureau chooses to do a national evaluation or a technical assistance contract which relates to this priority area.

- (4) The project director, project evaluator, and a representative from the program being replicated will attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first six months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C. The project director, the evaluator, and a representative of the program being replicated will also attend an annual three to five day meeting with the Children's Bureau staff in Washington, D.C.
- (5) All required reports will be submitted in a timely manner, in recommended formats (to be provided), and the final report will also be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program.

PROJECT DURATION: The projects will be awarded for a period of 60 months. The initial grant award will be for a 12-month budget period. The award of continuation funding beyond each 12-month budget period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the government.

FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS: The maximum Federal share of the project is up to \$175,000 for the first year and up to \$350,000 for each subsequent year. No application seeking Federal funding exceeding the amount noted will be accepted for review.

MATCHING REQUIREMENTS: The grantee must provide at least ten percent of the total approved cost of the project. The total approved cost is the sum of the Federal share and the non-Federal share. Therefore, a project requesting \$175,000 for year one and \$350,000 per budget period for years two through five must include a match of at least \$19,444 in year one and \$38,889 per budget period for years two through five. Applicants should provide a letter of commitment verifying the actual amount of the non-Federal share of project costs.

The following example shows how to calculate the required 10 percent match amount for a \$175,000 grant and a \$350,000 grant:

	\$175,000	(Federal share)
divided by	.90	(100% - 10%)
equals	\$194,444	(total project cost including match)
minus	\$175,000	(federal share)
equals	\$19,444	(required 10% match)
	\$350,000	(Federal share)
divided by	.90	(100% - 10%)
equals	\$388,889	(total project cost including match)
minus	\$350,000	(federal share)
equals	\$38,889	(required 10% match)

The non-Federal share may be cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. If approved for funding, grantees will be held accountable for the commitment of non-Federal resources and failure to provide the required amount will result in a disallowance of unmatched Federal funds.

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED: It is anticipated that up to eight projects will be funded.

LENGTH OF APPLICATION: The length of the application is limited to 75 pages, including all forms and attachments. Any pages over this limit will be removed and will not be reviewed.

APPLICABLE GRANT REGULATIONS: Grants awarded under this program are subject to grant regulations under CFR Part 74 or 92.

CFDA NUMBER: 93.556

POST AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: All required reports must be submitted in a timely manner. Program progress reports must be submitted semi-annually. For example, for a project awarded by September 30, a semi-annual program progress report covering the period October through March and April through September is due for each year of the approved project period. A grantee is allowed 30 days to submit the report following the end of the six-month period. Recommended formats for the reports will be provided. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the project and will be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program. The financial reports (Form 269), both semi-annual and final, are also due on the same schedule as the program progress reports.

2003D.2 Evaluations of Existing Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Programs

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Public (State, Tribal, or local) or private nonprofit organizations, including community and faith-based organizations, or institutions of higher learning are eligible to apply. Collaborative efforts and interdisciplinary applications are encouraged; however, a primary applicant must be identified.

PURPOSE: To support continuous innovation and improvement in the quality of child abuse and neglect services by rigorously evaluating existing child abuse prevention programs that incorporate features and components that hold promise for contributing to an expansion of knowledge about familial and systemic aspects of the prevention of child abuse and neglect, and which have not yet been rigorously evaluated. Grants awarded under this priority area can only be used to fund the **evaluation** of a program. Funds cannot be used to support actual program operations.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Although there is now a considerable body of research which identifies various risk and protective factors for child maltreatment, information about successful approaches to the prevention of child abuse and neglect has only recently become available. There is a growing body of research on the benefits of well-designed and well-administered home visiting programs for both the child and the parents. School-based child sexual abuse prevention programs and parent education programs have also experienced a relatively concentrated research focus, and while some positive effects have been found, the results are not conclusive. Unfortunately little is known about the vast array of other kinds of family support programs that also have the goal of preventing child abuse and neglect, including respite care, mutual parent support, family resource centers, and media campaigns.

In response to the need to share information about promising practices in child abuse and neglect prevention, the Children's Bureau, Office on Child Abuse and Neglect embarked on the *Emerging Practices* project to describe the current landscape of prevention programs and collect information about effective and innovative prevention programs. Through a national nomination process that was completed in 2002, several strategies and features of child abuse prevention programs were identified as holding promise for reducing the incidence of child maltreatment. However, the report also noted the strong need to expand the existing knowledge about the effectiveness of prevention. Most of the nominations were submitted under the innovative program category, which did not require applicants to submit evaluation data on their program's effectiveness. (To obtain a copy of the report, visit <http://www.calib.com/nccanch/prevention>.) Though the notion of demonstrating impact through evaluation has made great strides, the maltreatment prevention community needs to continue to develop a more outcomes-based approach to program planning and design. Service providers are increasingly recognizing the importance of evaluation and performance measurement and the connection between demonstrated impact and securing funding. However, there is still a gap in the capacity of

prevention programs to fully realize these goals. This priority area is an effort to narrow that gap.

This award is for the evaluation of a fully operational prevention program. Funds from this award are not to be used for a prevention activity, intervention, or delivery of service, only for the evaluation of a prevention intervention or prevention service delivery model. The evaluation may be of an established prevention program or of an operational but new prevention program not funded by Federal discretionary grant dollars. To date, few child abuse prevention programs have undergone rigorous evaluation and the purpose of this priority area is to increase knowledge in this area.

The findings from evaluation projects supported under this priority are expected to provide insights into more effective approaches to the delivery of services in the area of prevention. While applicants will be accorded considerable latitude in the selection of the program to be evaluated and the proposed focus of the evaluation, the Children's Bureau is interested in evaluation projects that are likely to address one or more of the following goals: expand the current knowledge base, build on prior research, contribute to practice enhancements, inform policy, improve science, and/or contribute to the continued expansion of knowledge about the familial and systemic aspects of the prevention of child maltreatment. Applicants may choose to submit proposals to conduct a retrospective evaluation of an existing and/or established program or they may choose to conduct a prospective evaluation, which will track the outcomes for a newly created or existing program. Programs that are being considered for evaluation must be fully operational at the time this award will be made.

Under this priority area, the program or project to be evaluated and the research focus of the evaluation must be of sufficient scope and magnitude to merit intensive investigation. The evaluation focus should have national scope, and the findings from the evaluation should have a high probability of significantly advancing theory, policy, and evidence-based practice in the field. Therefore, the program or project to be evaluated must have a sufficient number of subjects (e.g., children, families, social service providers, caseworkers, and supervisors) to sustain a rigorous, methodologically sound research and evaluation plan.

REVIEW CRITERIA: The following specific criteria will be used to review and evaluate the applications in this priority area. The applicant should answer each question listed under each criterion. It is strongly recommended that applicants organize their proposals around these criteria, so that reviewers can readily find information that directly addresses each of the specific review criteria. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

CRITERION 1: OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

- (1) State the goals and objectives of the proposed evaluation project. (Goals are herein defined as the end products of an effective project and objectives are defined as measurable steps for reaching these goals.)
- (2) Describe the prevention program that will be evaluated and explain why it merits evaluation. Include a description of its significant features and components, including goals and objectives, history, characteristics of the target population, the magnitude and severity of the problems and needs the program addresses, geographic location, context and services provided. Programs or projects that are the focus of the proposed evaluation must be described clearly and in detail in the application. This description should include an explanation of the linkages among the characteristics and service needs of the target population, program or project services provided, and expected outcomes. Additionally, the conceptual, theoretical and/or practice basis underpinning the structure, operations, components or strategies used by the program or project should be explained.
- (3) Present a concise summary of the literature that reflects an understanding of the research on best practices and promising approaches in the child abuse and neglect prevention field.
- (4) Present the evidence which currently exists that the program to be evaluated holds promise for increasing protective factors and/or reducing the risk factors for child abuse and neglect. Describe the current state of knowledge related to the evaluation focus, including a review of the relevant, current literature and any evaluations of this program. Applicants are expected to include all bibliographic references.
- (5) Describe the conceptual framework for this evaluation. Describe the strengths and potential limitations for interpreting and generalizing from the findings of this evaluation. Describe the logic model that structures the proposed evaluation and explains the linkages among the target population, program or project services and expected outcomes and the research and evaluation questions to be addressed or hypotheses to be tested.
- (6) Describe contextual factors which might facilitate or hinder the implementation of the proposed evaluation project, and opportunities and barriers which might arise in its design and implementation. Explain how the project would address these issues.
- (7) Describe the results and benefits to be derived from this evaluation. Explain how this project would improve evidence-based practices to prevent child maltreatment. Explain how the findings from the proposed study would significantly inform policy, improve practice, and/or advance the science of child abuse and neglect prevention research.

CRITERION 2: APPROACH (50 Points)

- (1) Describe the timeline for implementing the proposed evaluation. The timeline should include the sequence and timing of the major tasks and subtasks, important milestones, reports, and completion dates. The application should also discuss factors that may

affect project implementation or the outcomes and present realistic strategies for the resolution of these difficulties.

- (2) Describe the issues related to program evaluation in general, and additional issues for evaluating this particular program in this particular context. Explain how the proposed approach would address these issues.
- (3) Describe the proposed evaluation methodology. The applicant should describe the following, as appropriate: proposed evaluation design, including definitions of terms and variables; population and sampling plan, including the rationale, and strengths and potential limitations for interpretations of findings due to the gender and/or ethnic composition of the proposed sample; use of comparison or control groups and the rationale for selecting these groups; recruitment and retention procedures, including realistic estimates of attrition, and a discussion of appropriate procedures for handling attrition or interpreting the findings of the evaluation in light of attrition; types of qualitative and quantitative data to be collected; data collection procedures and instruments, including information on reliability and validity of the instruments with the population proposed; plans for cost-effectiveness/ cost-benefit analysis; access to the data sources (e.g., project files, staff, project clients); and data analysis plan and the rationale for use of various analytic techniques appropriate to the study.
- (4) Describe the relationship between the applicant and the program that is to be evaluated. Community and/or faith-based organizations and agencies that are submitting applications under this priority area, but do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, large-scale evaluation are advised to propose contracting with a third-party evaluator specializing in social science research and evaluation, or a university or college to conduct the evaluation. If the program is evaluating itself, explain how objectivity would be maintained. If the evaluator is external to the program, describe the plan for ensuring a good working relationship between the evaluator and the program to be evaluated. Applications proposing an external evaluation should include a letter of agreement signed by the applicant and the program to be evaluated. This letter should describe the proposed relationship between the applicant and the program to be replicated, list the roles and responsibilities of both partners and express commitment to participate together if the proposal is funded.
- (5) Describe the plan for ensuring that the evaluation would be culturally sensitive to the target population.
- (6) Describe the plan for identifying the program components and strategies which are most closely linked to desired results.
- (7) Describe existing data which would be used in the evaluation. Include information on data which the program previously collected about individuals and families; types of services provided, service utilization, achievement of project objectives, and types and nature of needs met. Explain how this existing data would be acquired, managed and re-analyzed.
- (8) Describe new data which would be collected for the evaluation.
- (9) Describe the plan for ensuring compliance with all Departmental regulations and procedures pertaining to confidentiality and careful handling of information on

individuals, families and evaluation data, and obtaining informed consent from participants, and plans regarding an Institutional Review Board (IRB) review, if applicable.

- (10) If the project involves partnerships with additional agencies or organizations, describe the roles and responsibilities of each partner. These should be clearly specified.
- (11) Describe products which would be developed during the evaluation. Products may include questionnaires, interview guides and other data collection instruments, software designed for the proposed project, Internet applications (i.e., web postings), technical reports, journal articles, and a final report describing the project evaluated, issues addressed, project design, implementation, outcomes and the results of the evaluation. Applicants should discuss the intended audiences for these products (e.g., researchers, policymakers, and practitioners).
- (12) Describe the plan for summarizing, reporting, and disseminating the best practices, lessons learned and evaluation findings to key audiences.

CRITERION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES (20 Points)

- (1) Describe the applicant organization's capabilities and experience relative to this project. Discuss experience with and provide details of administration, development, implementation, and management of similar evaluation projects. If the application involves partnering and/or subcontracting with other agencies/organizations, then the application should include an organizational capability statement for each participating organization documenting the ability of the partners and/or subcontractors to fulfill their assigned roles and functions.
- (2) Describe the applicant organization's capabilities and experience relative to programs for the prevention of child abuse and neglect.
- (3) Describe the relevant knowledge, experience, and capabilities which the proposed project director, principal investigator, and other key project staff bring to the project. Discuss their background to manage and implement an evaluation project of this size, scope, and complexity, including administration, data collection, data processing and analysis, reporting and dissemination of findings. Include brief resumes of these staff. Describe the role, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors, and/or partners. Include a list of organizations and consultants who will work with the program along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.
- (4) Describe the relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated or underway with Federal assistance by the applicant.
- (5) Describe the management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality. The role and responsibilities of the lead agency should be clearly defined and, if appropriate, applicants should discuss the management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors, and consultants.

- (6) Describe the role of the author of this proposal in the implementation of the proposed project.

CRITERION 4: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (10 Points)

- (1) Explain why the costs of the proposed project are reasonable, in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits. Discussion should refer to the budget information presented on Standard Forms 424 and 424A and the applicant's budget justification.
- (2) Describe the fiscal control and accounting procedures which would be used to ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement and accurate accounting of funds received under this program announcement.
- (3) Allocate sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director and the principal investigator (and if applicable a representative of the program being evaluated) to attend an annual grantee meeting to be held in Washington, D.C. (Attendance at this meeting is a grant requirement.)

ASSURANCES: By signing the SF 424, the organization agrees to comply with the following:

- (1) Applicant will have the project fully functioning within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.
- (2) The applicant will participate if the Children's Bureau chooses to do a national evaluation or a technical assistance contract, which relates to this priority area.
- (3) The project director and the principal investigator (and, if applicable, a representative of the program being evaluated) will attend an annual grantee meeting to be held in Washington, D.C.
- (4) All required reports will be submitted in a timely manner, in recommended formats (to be provided), and the final report will also be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program.

PROJECT DURATION: The projects will be awarded for a period of 36 months. The initial grant award will be for a 12-month budget period. The award of continuation funding beyond each 12-month budget period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the government.

FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS: The maximum Federal share of the project is \$200,000 per budget period. No application seeking Federal funding exceeding the amount noted will be accepted for review.

MATCHING REQUIREMENTS: There is no matching requirement.

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED: It is anticipated that up to four projects will be funded.

LENGTH OF APPLICATION: The length of the application is limited to 50 pages, including all forms and attachments. Any pages over this limit will be removed and will not be reviewed.

APPLICABLE GRANT REGULATIONS: Grants awarded under this program are subject to grant regulations under CFR Part 74 or 92.

CFDA NUMBER: 93.556

POST AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: All required reports must be submitted in a timely manner. Program progress reports must be submitted semi-annually. For example, for a project awarded by September 30, a semi-annual program progress report covering the period October through March and April through September is due for each year of the approved project period. A grantee is allowed 30 days to submit the report following the end of the six-month period. Recommended formats for the reports will be provided. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the project and will be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program. The financial reports (Form 269), both semi-annual and final, are also due on the same schedule as the program progress reports.

2003D.3 Evaluations of Existing Family Support, Family Preservation, Reunification, or Adoption Promotion and Support Programs

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: Public (State, Tribal, or local) or private nonprofit organizations, including community and faith-based organizations, or institutions of higher learning are eligible to apply. Collaborative efforts and interdisciplinary applications are encouraged; however, a primary applicant must be identified.

PURPOSE: To support continuous innovation and improvement in the quality of family support, family preservation, time-limited family reunification and adoption promotion and support programs by rigorously evaluating programs that have not previously been evaluated and that hold promise for contributing to an expansion of knowledge about effective services to strengthen and support families at-risk or in crisis and to ensure children's safety and healthy development.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The Promoting Safe and Stable Families program (title IV-B, Subpart 2, of the Social Security Act) provides funds to enable States and eligible Tribes to develop, establish, expand, or operate coordinated programs of community-based family support services, family preservation services, time-limited family reunification services, and adoption promotion and support services.

After the program was enacted in 1993 as the Family Preservation and Family Support Services program, the Department of Health and Human Services funded several national studies of family support and family preservation programs. The outcome study of family preservation services conducted a rigorous, experimental-design evaluation of programs in four sites, each of which used the Homebuilders' model of family preservation services. The study found few program effects in the areas of reducing foster care placement, improving family functioning or enhancing child safety. However, families receiving family preservation services did receive a broader and deeper array of services and were more satisfied with their receipt of child welfare services than were children receiving traditional child welfare services. The evaluation of family support services found that family support services produced small but significant effects across a range of outcomes for parents and children. However, the evaluation was not able to identify a single uniquely effective service model and found that the effects of family support are not evenly distributed across different program models.

Since the time of those evaluations the purposes of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program have expanded to include time-limited reunification services and adoption promotion and support services and the field has continued to develop and learn from previous evaluation. Therefore, the Children's Bureau is interested in funding a new cluster of field-initiated evaluations of promising program models in each of the four service categories supported by the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. Of particular interest are evaluations of time-limited reunification programs and adoption promotion and support programs; programs that are tailored to specific populations (e.g., families with specific problems; children of specific age

ranges); and multi-disciplinary service models designed to address parental substance abuse and to reduce its impacts on children. The programs to be evaluated may be, but need not be, supported through the federal Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program.

The findings from evaluation projects supported under this priority are expected to provide insights into more effective approaches to the delivery of services in each of these areas. While applicants will be accorded considerable latitude in the selection of the program to be evaluated and the proposed focus of the evaluation, the Children's Bureau is interested in evaluation projects that are likely to expand the current knowledge base, build on prior research, contribute to practice enhancements, inform policy, improve science, and/or contribute to the continued expansion of knowledge about healthy families.

This award is to be used specifically for the evaluation of a fully operational family support, family preservation, time-limited family reunification, or adoption promotion and support program. Funds from this award are **not** to be used for the intervention or delivery of services; only for the evaluation of the service or program. The evaluation may be of either: (a) an established program or (b) an operational but new program not funded by the Children's Bureau and with no other rigorous evaluation activity.

Under this priority area, the program or project to be evaluated and the research focus of the evaluation must be of sufficient scope and magnitude to merit intensive investigation. The evaluation focus should have national implications and the findings from the evaluation should have a high probability of significantly advancing theory, policy and evidence-based practice in the field. Therefore, the program or project to be evaluated must have a sufficient number of subjects (e.g., children, families, social service providers, caseworkers, and supervisors) to sustain a rigorous, methodologically sound, research and evaluation plan.

REVIEW CRITERIA: The following specific criteria will be used to review and evaluate the applications in this priority area. The applicant should respond to each element listed under each criterion. It is strongly recommended that applicants organize their proposals around these criteria, so that reviewers can readily find information that directly addresses each of the specific review criteria. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

CRITERION 1: OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

- (1) State the goals and objectives of the proposed evaluation project. (Goals are herein defined as the end products of an effective project and objectives are defined as measurable steps for reaching these goals.)
- (2) Describe the program which will be evaluated and explain why it merits evaluation. Include information about its significant features and components, including goals and objectives, history, characteristics of the target population, the magnitude and severity of the problems and needs the program addresses, geographic location, context and

services provided. Programs or projects that are the focus of the proposed evaluation must be described clearly and in detail in the application. This description should include an explanation of the linkages among the characteristics and service needs of the target population, program or project services provided, and expected outcomes. Additionally, the conceptual, theoretical, and/or practice basis underpinning the structure, operations, components or strategies used by the program or project should be explained.

- (3) Present a concise summary of the literature that reflects an understanding of the research on best practices and promising approaches in the area being addressed (specifically: community-based family support services, family preservation services, time-limited family reunification services, or adoption promotion and support services).
- (4) Present the evidence which currently exists that the program to be evaluated holds promise for increasing protective factors and/or reducing the risk factors for child abuse and neglect. Describe the current state of knowledge related to the evaluation focus, including a review of the relevant, current literature about this kind of program. Applicants are expected to include all bibliographic references.
- (5) Describe the conceptual framework for this evaluation, and the strengths and potential limitations for interpreting and generalizing from the findings of this evaluation. Describe the logic model that structures the proposed evaluation and explains the linkages among the target population, program or project services, and expected outcomes and the research and evaluation questions to be addressed or hypotheses to be tested.
- (6) Describe contextual factors which might facilitate or hinder the implementation of the proposed evaluation project, and opportunities and barriers which might arise in its design and implementation. Explain how the project would address these issues.
- (7) Describe the results and benefits to be derived from this evaluation. Explain how this project would improve evidence-based practices and how the findings from the proposed study would significantly inform policy and improve practice.

CRITERION 2: APPROACH (50 Points)

- (1) Describe the timeline for implementing the proposed evaluation. The timeline should include the sequence and timing of the major tasks and subtasks, important milestones, reports, and completion dates. The application should also discuss factors that may affect project implementation or the outcomes and present realistic strategies for the resolution of these difficulties.
- (2) Describe the issues related to program evaluation in general, and additional issues for evaluating this particular program in this particular context. Explain how the proposed project would address these issues.
- (3) Describe the proposed evaluation methodology. The applicant should describe the following, as appropriate: proposed evaluation design, including definitions of terms and variables; population and sampling plan, including the rationale, and strengths and potential limitations for interpretations of findings due to the gender and/or ethnic

composition of the proposed sample; use of comparison or control groups and the rationale for selecting these groups; recruitment and retention procedures, including realistic estimates of attrition, and a discussion of appropriate procedures for handling attrition or interpreting the findings of the evaluation in light of attrition; types of qualitative and quantitative data to be collected; data collection procedures and instruments, including information on reliability and validity of the instruments with the population proposed; access to the data sources (e.g., project files, staff, project clients); and data analysis plan and the rationale for use of various analytic techniques appropriate to the study.

- (4) Describe the relationship between the applicant and the program that is to be evaluated. Community-based and/or faith-based organizations and agencies that are submitting applications under this priority area, but do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, large-scale evaluation are advised to propose contracting with a third-party evaluator specializing in social science research and evaluation, or a university or college to conduct the evaluation. If the program is evaluating itself, explain how objectivity would be maintained. If the evaluator is external to the program, describe the plan for ensuring a good working relationship between the evaluator and the program to be evaluated. Applications proposing an external evaluation should include a letter of agreement signed by the applicant and the program to be evaluated. This letter should describe the proposed relationship between the applicant and the program to be replicated, list the roles and responsibilities of both partners and express commitment to participate together if the proposal is funded.
- (5) Describe the plan for ensuring that the evaluation will be culturally sensitive to the target population.
- (6) Describe the plan for identifying the program components and strategies which are most closely linked to desired results.
- (7) Describe existing data which would be used in the evaluation. Include information on data which the program has previously collected about individuals and families; types of services provided, service utilization, achievement of project objectives, and types and nature of needs met. Explain how this existing data would be acquired, managed and re-analyzed
- (8) Describe new data which would be collected for the evaluation.
- (9) Describe the plan for ensuring compliance with all Departmental regulations and procedures pertaining to confidentiality and careful handling of information on individuals, families and evaluation data, and obtaining informed consent from participants.
- (10) If the project involves partnerships with additional agencies or organizations, describe the roles and responsibilities of each partner. These should be clearly specified.
- (11) Describe products which would be developed during the evaluation. Products may include questionnaires, interview guides and other data collection instruments, software designed for the proposed project, Internet applications (i.e., web postings), technical reports, journal articles, and a final report describing the project evaluated, issues addressed, project design, implementation, outcomes and the results of the evaluation.

Applicants should discuss the intended audiences for these products (e.g., researchers, policymakers, and practitioners).

- (12) Describe the plan for summarizing, reporting and disseminating the best practices, lessons learned and evaluation findings to key audiences.

CRITERION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES (20 Points)

- (1) Describe the applicant organization's capabilities and experience relative to this project. Discuss experience with and provide details of administration, development, implementation, and management of similar evaluation projects. If the application involves partnering and/or subcontracting with other agencies/organizations, then the application should include an organizational capability statement for each participating organization documenting the ability of the partners and/or subcontractors to fulfill their assigned roles and functions.
- (2) Describe the organization's capabilities and experience relative to family support, family preservation, time-limited reunification, or adoption promotion and support programs.
- (3) Describe the relevant knowledge, experience, and capabilities which the proposed project director, principal investigator, and other key project staff bring to the project. Discuss their background to manage and implement an evaluation project of this size, scope and complexity, including administration, data collection, data processing and analysis, reporting and dissemination of findings. Include brief resumes of these staff. Describe the role, responsibilities and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors and/or partners. Include a list of organizations and consultants who will work with the program along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.
- (4) Describe the relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated or underway with Federal assistance by the applicant.
- (5) Describe the management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality. The role and responsibilities of the lead agency should be clearly defined and, if appropriate, applicants should discuss the management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors and consultants.
- (6) Describe the role of the author of this proposal in the implementation of the proposed project.

CRITERION 4: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (10 Points)

- (1) Explain why the costs of the proposed project are reasonable, in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits. Discussion should refer to the budget information presented on Standard Forms 424 and 424A and the applicant's budget justification.
- (2) Describe the fiscal control and accounting procedures which would be used to ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement and accurate accounting of funds received under this program announcement.
- (3) Allocate sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director and the principal investigator (and, if applicable, a representative of the program being evaluated) to attend an annual grantee meeting to be held in Washington, D.C. (Attendance at this meeting is a grant requirement.)

ASSURANCES: By signing the SF 424, the organization agrees to comply with the following:

- (1) Applicant will have the project fully functioning within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.
- (2) The applicant will participate if the Children's Bureau chooses to do a national evaluation or a technical assistance contract which relates to this priority area.
- (3) The project director and the principal investigator (and if applicable a representative of the program being evaluated) will attend an annual grantee meeting to be held in Washington, D.C.
- (4) All required reports will be submitted in a timely manner, in recommended formats (to be provided), and the final report will also be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program.

PROJECT DURATION: The projects will be awarded for a period of 36 months. The initial grant award will be for a 12-month budget period. The award of continuation funding beyond each 12-month budget period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the government.

FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT COST: The maximum Federal share of the project is \$200,000 per budget period. No application seeking Federal funding exceeding the amount noted will be accepted for review.

MATCHING REQUIREMENTS: There is no matching requirement.

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED: It is anticipated that up to three projects will be funded.

LENGTH OF APPLICATION: The length of the application is limited to 50 pages, including all forms and attachments. Any pages over this limit will be removed and will not be reviewed.

APPLICABLE GRANT REGULATIONS: Grants awarded under this program are subject to grant regulations under CFR Part 74 or 92.

CFDA NUMBER: 93.556

POST AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: All required reports must be submitted in a timely manner. Program progress reports must be submitted semi-annually. For example, for a project awarded by September 30, a semi-annual program progress report covering the period October through March and April through September is due for each year of the approved project period. A grantee is allowed 30 days to submit the report following the end of the six-month period. Recommended formats for the reports will be provided. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the project and will be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program. The financial reports (Form 269), both semi-annual and final, are also due on the same schedule as the program progress reports.

2003D.4 Projects to Develop Programs to Strengthen Marriages

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: State child welfare agencies, local (county or community) child welfare or child protective service agencies, in partnership with experienced marriage education providers, which may be public or private non-profit organizations including faith and community-based organizations. The child welfare agency must be the primary applicant responsible for administering the grant.

PURPOSE: To refine, implement, and evaluate an articulated, specifiable program supporting marriage relationships targeting married parenting couples, and/or cohabitating parenting couples known to the child welfare agency, as well as community members who request the opportunity to participate in the program. The program must promote healthy marriage and family formation as a means of achieving safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families, particularly those in the child welfare system.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) legislation (Section 430, Title IV-B, Subpart 2, of the Social Security Act as amended by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993) primarily provides grants to states and Indian tribes for four areas of assistance: family support, family preservation, time-limited family reunification, and adoption promotion and support services. Following its reauthorization, family support under PSSF was specifically expanded to include services that strengthen parental relationships and promote healthy marriages.

The family preservation, time-limited family reunification, and adoption promotion support areas also allow for marriage support services, when appropriate, that work to strengthen parental relationships and enhance the well-being of children and families. Family preservation services are designed to support children and families, including adoptive and extended families, who are at risk or in crisis. Marriage education services can be applied within this area to provide follow up care to families to whom a child has been returned after foster care placement. These services can help couples cope with the stressors that can accompany reunification with their child. Time-limited family reunification services are designed to provide needed services to parents and primary caregivers of children who have been removed from the home. Services under this category could include strengthening parental relationships and the promotion of healthy marriages through marital counseling, mental health services, domestic violence assistance, and temporary childcare. Marriage strengthening services (also within time-limited family reunification) may offer critical support to parents who are dealing with the stressors of a child returning to home. Adoption promotion and support services are designed to expedite the adoption process and support adoptive families. By supporting adoptive couples through marriage strengthening services, parents are better able to meet the unique stressors of adopting a child. These services can be provided both pre- and post-adoption. The marriage-related services that are provided under the PSSF legislation work to strengthen and protect the well-being of both children and families.

As one of the few Federal programs developed to help families to stay together, avoid removal of children from their homes, and support timely reunification (as long as these measures are taken while ensuring children's safety, and temporary removal was deemed necessary), Projects to Develop Programs to Strengthen Marriages is part of a pioneering effort to support and promote marriage education and support services to enhance the well-being of children and families while strengthening and preserving the family unit.

A small portion of the authorization is used for research and technical assistance related to the purposes of the legislation. PSSF assistance is based on several key principles:

- That the welfare and safety of children and of all family members should be maintained while strengthening and preserving the family.
- That it is advantageous for the family as a whole to receive services that identify and enhance its strengths while meeting individual and family needs; and
- That services should be easily accessible and they should respect cultural and community differences.

For many years, public and private organizations have offered parenting classes as a means of preventing child maltreatment, strengthening parents' knowledge and skills on how to raise healthy and well-adjusted children, and improving parent-child interactions. While many programs have focused on building the skills of parents in raising their children, few have focused on the skills parents need to promote or sustain a healthy marriage. And yet, the consensus among researchers is that children do best on many measures when they are raised by both biological parents in a stable and healthy marriage.

Research reveals that the benefits of healthy marriages for children are numerous. On average, children raised by parents in healthy marriages are less likely to fail at school, suffer an emotional or behavioral problem requiring psychiatric treatment, be victims of child abuse and neglect, get into trouble with the law, use illicit drugs, smoke cigarettes, abuse alcohol, engage in early and promiscuous sexual activity, grow up in poverty, or attempt suicide. On average, children raised by parents in healthy marriages are more likely to have a higher sense of self-esteem, form healthy marriages when they marry, attend college, and are physically healthier.

ACF has undertaken several crosscutting program and field activities to promote the national marriage and responsible fatherhood agenda, engaging States, communities, and faith-based organizations in a partnership with ACF. This priority area provides a unique opportunity to gather evidence about how communities can improve outcomes for children by strengthening marriage and promoting family life. These demonstration grant activities will help spur new community-level approaches that will promote child safety, stability, and well-being by strengthening the relationships between parents.

Funds for Projects to Develop Programs to Strengthen Marriages will be used to stimulate the development and evaluation of community-based programs that promote child safety and well-being. By working closely with parents, when appropriate, to strengthen their relationship skills and improve the quality of family life, these programs will work to improve outcomes for children. Along with the skills that enable couples to communicate more effectively, manage conflict, and work together as a team, these demonstration programs can also teach the benefits that can be obtained from identifying expected challenges in relationships so that these challenges can be successfully negotiated when they arise.

Marriage education is based on the premise that couples can learn how to build and maintain successful, stable marriages. One approach is based on research into what distinguishes marriages that succeed from those that fail. Research has found that it is not that successful couples have fewer differences or less to fight about, but rather that they are able to effectively handle their inevitable differences or disagreements.² Through marriage education couples can learn how to do more of what makes marriages successful and less of what predicts marital unhappiness and breakdown. Priority Area 2003D.4 will provide this opportunity to strengthen parenting/marital skills within a healthy and supportive relationship.

Programs or specific elements of the proposed program must be based on and supported by evidence from research or evaluations of the programs. The programs proposed here to strengthen marriages may be refined from existing marriage strengthening programs or fully replicated programs that may have targeted participants other than those identified here. The programs submitted in response to this competition should test the existing model with these participants and help the participants develop a set of particular, measurable, and definable skills. The partnership between the child welfare agency and the experienced marriage education service provider must be described as well.

NOTE: Activities funded under this priority area are demonstration projects. See Section I for more information on preparing a successful demonstration project application.

REVIEW CRITERIA: The following specific criteria will be used to review and evaluate the applications in this priority area. The applicant should answer each question listed under each criterion. It is strongly recommended that applicants organize their proposals around these criteria, so that reviewers can readily find information that directly addresses each of the specific review criteria. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

² “Predicting Marital Happiness and Stability from Newlywed Interactions”, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*; Minneapolis; Feb 1998; John MGottman; James Coan; Sybil Carrere; Catherine Swanson

CRITERION 1: OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

- (1) Describe the goals and objectives of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families legislation and explain how the proposed project would contribute to achieving those goals and objectives.
- (2) Describe your vision of the service program you anticipate delivering and explain how it would compare to similar existing programs.
- (3) State the goals and objectives of the proposed project. (Goals are herein defined as the end products of an effective project and objectives are defined as measurable steps for reaching these goals.)
- (4) Describe the context of the proposed project, including the geographic location, characteristics of the community (socioeconomic and demographic) and target population (age, race, ethnicity, length of stay in foster care, relationship to the child welfare agency), the magnitude and severity of the problems and needs to be addressed, including barriers and gaps in community and or child welfare system.
- (5) Describe the needs of the target population and your plan to meet these needs.
- (6) Describe the benefits that clients will derive and the anticipated number of clients to be served in your project. Explain the basis for these estimates.
- (7) Describe and summarize the relevant literature on research and best practices regarding programs to strengthen marriages and explain how this literature review supports the proposed project.
- (8) Describe and summarize current initiatives in marriage strengthening and explain how the proposed approach would build on or differ from these initiatives.
- (9) Describe the conceptual framework for this project, and show how it is evidence based (supported by theory, research, evaluation data and best practices). Explain how this framework relates to the structure of the proposed program.
- (10) Describe the linkages between the proposed program's activities and its intended outcomes.
- (11) Explain why the proposed project is innovative and how it would contribute to increased knowledge of the problems, issues, and effective strategies and practices in the field.
- (12) If successfully implemented and evaluated, explain how likely it is that the proposed project would yield findings or results that would contribute to and promote evidence-based practices.
- (13) Explain why the proposed project's findings or results would be useful to other agencies and organizations in developing services and programs, benefit national policy and practice, and identify issues for additional research in the field.
- (14) Explain why the proposed project has potential for implementation in other settings. Explain how the components and strategies of the proposed project would be documented so that the successful elements of the approach might be replicated by other agencies addressing the same or similar problems.

CRITERION 2: APPROACH (50 Points)

- (1) Describe your plan of action for implementing the project.
- (2) If the project involves sub-contracts other than the partnership between the child welfare agency and the experienced marriage strengthening service provider, describe the clearly specified roles of the additional partners as well as the roles and responsibilities of the two primary partners.
- (3) Describe ways in which the proposed program design is evidence based and explain how it reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practices on marriage and family formation.
- (4) Explain why the program design is feasible and particularly appropriate to address the needs of the target population.
- (5) Describe the plan for documenting project activities and results, including the development of a data collection infrastructure that is sufficient to support a methodologically sound and rigorous evaluation.
- (6) Describe the data which would be collected on individuals and families, the types of services provided and used, and the types and nature of needs identified and met. Explain how these data would be collected. Explain how informed consent would be secured and maintained and describe your plans regarding an Institutional Review Board (IRB) review, if applicable.
- (7) Explain how the plan of action would lead to measurable improvements in the safety, permanency and well-being of children and families, stronger marriages and healthier families.
- (8) Explain how the proposed project would establish and maintain effective linkages with other appropriate agencies and organizations on the local, State or Federal level serving the target population.
- (9) Describe the specific steps that would be taken to ensure that the proposed project builds local capacity and yields results that would extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance as a part of the agency's ongoing program.
- (10) Describe changes which would be made in staff training, agency policies and requirements in order to respond to the needs of the population of children and families to be served.
- (11) Describe in detail the specific services that would be provided under the proposed project. Also describe which research-based marriage education program that will be provided.
- (12) Explain how the proposed project would meet the needs of the specific child welfare target population and the needs of other community members who would also like to participate.
- (13) Explain how participants would be recruited and selected. Describe the criteria for creating groups of participants and the alternative services which will be made available to those not selected.
- (14) Describe the proposed service plan, including the number of sessions to be provided. Describe a sample session including your goals for the session and participants.

- (15) Describe the plan for ensuring a culturally sensitive approach to family formation and marriage strengthening that respectfully accounts for ethnic, racial, and community differences.
- (16) Explain how services would be structured to ensure that fees (services and legal) do not act as a barrier for any potential participant.
- (17) Describe the plan for evaluating achievement of project goals and objectives, customer satisfaction, processes, outcomes, impact, the effectiveness of project strategies and the efficiency of the implementation process. Agencies that do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, comprehensive evaluation of the project are advised to contract with a third-party evaluator specializing in social science or evaluation, or a university or college to conduct the evaluation. If not using internal resources for project evaluation, describe the plan for securing an external evaluator.
- (18) Describe how the logic model for this project demonstrates strong links between proposed inputs and activities, and intended short-term and long-term outcomes. (See Section I of this application package for more information on logic models.)
- (19) Explain how the proposed methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative outcome data.
- (20) Explain how the methods of evaluation would provide performance feedback and periodic assessment of program progress and how this feedback would be used to make on-going program adjustments.
- (21) Describe the plan for evaluating the innovations and adaptations used to improve marriage and parenting relationship, and the successes and failures of these innovations; collecting and analyzing data to track family functioning, marriage, parenting, and child safety and well-being; including descriptive information on the processes and procedures used in implementing the project.
- (22) Explain why the proposed methods of evaluation are feasible, comprehensive and appropriate to the goals, objectives and context of the proposed project.
- (23) Explain why the evaluation plan would be likely to yield findings or results about effective strategies, and contribute to and promote evaluation research and evidence-based practices that may be used to guide replication or testing in other settings.
- (24) Commit 10-15% of budget to project evaluation. (This evaluation can be conducted using in-house or in-kind resources, or through a contract. Agencies that do not have the in-house capacity to conduct an objective, large-scale evaluation are advised to propose contracting with a third-party evaluator, university or college, specializing in social science evaluation, to conduct the evaluation.)
- (25) Describe products which would be developed during the project (e.g. questionnaires, interview guides and other data collection instruments, software designed for the proposed project, Internet applications, web postings, technical reports, journal articles, and a final report describing the target population, issues addressed, project design, implementation, outcomes and the results of the project evaluation) and explain how these products would provide information that supports evidence-based improvements of practices on this topic in the field.

- (26) Describe the intended audience (e.g., researchers, policymakers, and practitioners) for product dissemination. Explain why this audience is appropriate to the goals of the proposed project and how the project's products would be useful to each of these audiences.
- (27) Describe the plan for disseminating information on strategies utilized and the outcomes achieved, and the mechanisms and forums for conveying the information and supporting replication by other interested agencies.
- (28) Describe the schedule for developing these products, and explain why the dissemination plan is appropriate in scope and budget.

CRITERION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES (20 Points)

- (1) Describe the applicant organization's capabilities and experience relative to this project. Discuss experience with and provide details of administration, replication, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of similar projects. If the application involves partnering and/or subcontracting with other agencies/organizations, then the application should include an organizational capability statement for each participating organization documenting the ability of the partners and/or subcontractors to fulfill their assigned roles and functions.
- (2) Describe the applicant and partner organization's capabilities and experience relative to programs for marriage strengthening and relationship skill building.
- (3) Describe the relevant knowledge, experience and capabilities which the proposed project director and key project staff bring to the project. Discuss their background to manage and implement a project of this size, scope and complexity. Include brief resumes of these staff. Describe the role, responsibilities and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors and/or partners. Include a list of organizations and consultants who will work with the program along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.
- (4) Describe the management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality. The role and responsibilities of the lead agency should be clearly defined and, if appropriate, applicants should discuss the management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors and consultants.
- (5) Describe the strategies for ensuring timely staffing and implementation. (Applicants are expected to have the project fully staffed and ready for implementation within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.)
- (6) Describe the plan for training project staff.
- (7) Describe the plan for ensuring compliance with all Departmental regulations and procedures pertaining to confidentiality and careful handling of information on individuals, families and evaluation data, and obtaining informed consent from participants.

- (8) Describe the organizational resources which the applicant commits to the proposed project, including administration, program operations, management information systems, data processing and analysis, evaluation, reporting and dissemination of findings.
- (9) Describe the relationship between the proposed project and other work planned, anticipated or underway with Federal assistance by the applicant.
- (10) Describe the role of the author of this proposal in the implementation of the proposed project.

CRITERION 4: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (10 Points)

- (1) Explain why the costs of the proposed project are reasonable, in view of the activities to be conducted and expected results and benefits. Discussion should refer to the budget information presented on Standard Forms 424 and 424A and the applicant's budget justification.
- (2) Describe the fiscal control and accounting procedures which would be used to ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement and accurate accounting of funds received under this program announcement.
- (3) Allocate sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director and the evaluator to attend an annual 3-day grantees' meeting in Washington, D.C., and to provide for the project director and the evaluator to attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first three months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C. (Attendance at these meetings is a grant requirement.)

ASSURANCES: By signing the SF 424, the organization agrees to comply with the following:

- (1) The applicant will have the project fully functioning within 90 days of the notification of the grant award.
- (2) The applicant will participate if the Children's Bureau chooses to do a national evaluation or a technical assistance contract which relates to this priority area.
- (3) The project director and the evaluator will attend an early kick-off meeting for grantees funded under this priority area, to be held within the first three months of the project (first year only) in Washington, D.C. and an annual three to five day meeting with the Children's Bureau staff in Washington, D.C.
- (4) All required reports will be submitted in a timely manner, in recommended formats (to be provided), and the final report will also be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program.

PROJECT DURATION: The projects will be awarded for a project period of 36 months. The initial grant award will be for a 12-month budget period. The award of continuation funding beyond each 12-month budget period will be subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress on the part of each grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the government.

FEDERAL SHARE OF PROJECT COSTS: The maximum Federal share of the project is \$200,000 per budget period. No application seeking Federal funding exceeding the amount noted will be accepted for review.

MATCHING OR COST SHARING REQUIREMENT: No match is required.

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED: It is anticipated that up to ten projects will be funded.

LENGTH OF APPLICATION: The length of the application is limited to 75 pages, including all forms and attachments. Any pages over this number will be removed and will not be reviewed.

APPLICABLE GRANT REGULATIONS: Grants awarded under this program are subject to grant regulations under CFR Part 74 or 92.

CFDA NUMBER: 93.556

POST AWARD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: All required reports must be submitted in a timely manner. Program progress reports must be submitted semi-annually. For example, for a project awarded by September 30, a semi-annual program progress report covering the period October through March and April through September is due for each year of the approved project period. A grantee is allowed 30 days to submit the report following the end of the six-month period. Recommended formats for the reports will be provided. The final report is due 90 days after the end of the project and will be submitted on disk or electronically using a standard word-processing program. The financial reports (Form 269), both semi-annual and final, are also due on the same schedule as the program progress reports.

PART III. The Application: Instructions, Review, and Funding Process

A. Application Format

To be considered for funding, each application must be submitted with the Standard Federal Forms (provided at the end of this announcement or through the electronic links provided) and following the guidance provided. The application must be signed by an individual authorized to act for the applicant agency and to assume responsibility for the obligations imposed by the terms and conditions of the grant award.

To be considered for funding, each applicant must submit one signed original and two additional copies of the application, including all forms and attachments, to the Application Receipt Point specified in the section titled **Deadline** at the beginning of the announcement. The original copy of the application must have original signatures, signed in black ink.

Applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget and Social Security Numbers if otherwise required for individuals. The copies may include summary salary information.

The application must be typed, double spaced, printed on only one side, with at least 1/2 inch margins on each side and 1 inch at the top and bottom, using standard 12 Point fonts (such as Times Roman or Courier). Pages must be numbered and each copy must be stapled securely in the upper left corner.

Pages over the page limit stated within each priority area will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. All copies of an application must be submitted in a single package, and a separate package must be submitted for each priority area. The package must be clearly labeled for the specific priority area it is addressing.

Because each application will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, maps, brochures, or any other items that cannot be processed easily on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Do not bind, clip, staple, or fasten in any way separate subsections of the application, including supporting documentation. Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the Federal government for review.

B. Application Content

Each application must contain the following items in the order listed:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form 424). Follow the instructions below and those that accompany the form.

In Item 5 of Form 424, include name, phone number, and, if available, email and fax numbers of the contact person.

In Item 8 of Form 424, check 'New.'

In Item 10 of Form 424, clearly identify the *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance* (CFDA) program title and number for the program for which funds are being requested as stated at the end of each priority area section. (Adoption Opportunities, 93.652; Child Abuse and Neglect, 93.670; Child Welfare Training, 93.648; Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 93.556)

In Item 11 of Form 424, identify the single Priority Area the application addresses.

In Item 12 of Form 424, identify the specific geographic area to be served.

In Item 14 of Form 424, identify Congressional districts of both the applicant and project.

2. Budget Information Non-Construction Programs (Form 424A) and Budget Justification.

Follow the instructions provided and those in the Uniform Project Description. Note that Federal funds provided to States and services or other resources purchased with Federal funds may not be used to match project grants.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION: Provide line item detail and detailed calculations for each budget object class identified on the Budget Information form. Detailed calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. The detailed budget must also include a breakout by the funding sources identified in Block 15 of the SF-424. Provide a narrative budget justification that describes how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocability of the proposed costs.

6a. PERSONNEL

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known. For each staff person, provide the title, time commitment to the project (in months), time commitment to the project (as a percentage or full-time equivalent), annual salary, grant

salary, and wage rates. Do not include the costs of consultants or personnel costs of delegate agencies or of specific project(s) or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

6b. FRINGE BENEFITS

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, FICA, retirement insurance, and taxes.

6c. TRAVEL

Description: Costs of project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization (does not include costs of consultant travel).

Justification: For each trip, show the total number of traveler(s), travel destination, duration of trip, per diem, mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used, and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. Travel costs for key staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops should be detailed in the budget.

6d. EQUIPMENT

Description: "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation shall be included in or excluded from acquisition cost in accordance with the organization's regular written accounting practices.)

Justification: For each type of equipment requested, provide a description of the equipment, the cost per unit, the number of units, the total cost, and a plan for use on the project, as well as use or disposal of the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy or section of its policy which includes the equipment definition.

6e. OTHER

Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to insurance, food, medical and dental costs (noncontractual), professional services costs, space and equipment rentals, printing and publication, computer use, training costs, such as tuition and stipends, staff development costs, and administrative costs.

Justification: Provide computations, a narrative description and a justification for each cost under this category.

6f. INDIRECT CHARGES

Description: Total amount of indirect costs. This category should be used only when the applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant Federal agency.

Justification: An applicant that will charge indirect costs to the grant must enclose a copy of the current rate agreement. If the applicant organization is in the process of initially developing or renegotiating a rate, it should immediately upon notification that an award will be made, develop a tentative indirect cost rate application based on its most recently completed fiscal year in accordance with the principles set forth in the cognizant agency's guidelines for establishing indirect cost rates, and submit it to the cognizant agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost applications may also request indirect costs. It should be noted that when an indirect cost rate is requested, those costs included in the indirect cost pool should not also be charged as direct costs to the grant. Also, if the applicant is requesting a rate which is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

3. Certifications/Assurances. Applicants requesting financial assistance for nonconstruction projects must file the Standard Form 424B, 'Assurances: Non-Construction Programs.' Applicants must sign and return the Standard Form 424B with their applications. Applicants must provide a certification regarding lobbying when applying for an award in excess of \$100,000. Applicants must sign and return the certification with their applications.

Applicants must disclose lobbying activities on the Standard Form LLL when applying for an award in excess of \$100,000. Applicants who have used non-Federal funds for lobbying activities in connection with receiving assistance under this announcement shall complete a disclosure form to report lobbying. Applicants must sign and return the disclosure form, if applicable, with their applications.

Applicants must make the appropriate certification of their compliance with the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988. By signing and submitting the application, the applicant is providing the certification and **need not** mail back the certification with the applications.

Applicants must make the appropriate certification that they are not presently debarred, suspended or otherwise ineligible for an award. By signing and submitting the application, the applicant is providing the certification and **need not** mail back the certification with the applications.

Applicants must make the appropriate certification regarding environmental tobacco smoke. By signing and submitting the application, the applicant is providing the certification and **need not** mail back the certification with the applications.

If applicable, applicants must include a completed Form 310, Protection of Human Subjects.

If applicable, applicants must include a completed SPOC certification (Single Point of Contact) with the date of the SPOC contact entered in line 16, page 1 of the Form 424.

By signing the “Signature of Authorized Representative” on the SF 424, the applicant is providing a certification and **need not** mail assurances for completing the following grant and cooperative agreement requirements:

participation in any evaluation or technical assistance effort supported by ACYF;

submission of all required semi-annual and final Financial Status Reports (SF269) and Program Performance Reports in a timely manner, in hard-copy and electronic formats (preferably MS WORD and PDF) as negotiated with the Federal Project Officer; and

attendance of a key staff person and evaluator, if applicable, from the project at an annual 3-5 day grantees’ meeting (to be determined by the Children’s Bureau) in Washington, D.C. and at a “kick-off” meeting following award (if specified in the Priority Area).

The Office for Human Research Protections of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provides website information and policy guidance on the Federal regulations pertaining to protection of human subjects (45 CFR 46), informed consent, informed consent checklists, confidentiality of personal identification information, data collection procedures, and internal review boards: <http://ohrp.osophs.dhhs.gov/polasur.htm>.

In implementing their projects, grantees are expected to comply with all applicable administrative regulations regarding extent or types of costs. Applicable DHHS regulations can be found in 45 CFR Part 74 or 92.

4. Project Abstract/Summary (one page maximum). Clearly mark this page with the applicant name as shown on item 5 of the Form 424, identify the competitive grant Priority Area and the title of the proposed project as shown in item 11 and the service area as shown in item 12 of the Form 424. The summary description should not exceed 300 words.

Care should be taken to produce an abstract/summary that accurately and concisely reflects the proposed project. It should describe the objectives of the project, the approach to be used and the results or benefits expected.

5. Project Description for Evaluation. Applicants should organize their project description according to the Evaluation Criteria described in each priority area providing information that addresses all the components.

C. State Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

Adoption Opportunities program applicants are not required to submit their applications to SPOCs. The other programs in this announcement are covered under Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

The following jurisdictions have elected not to participate in the Executive Order process. Applicants from these jurisdictions or for projects administered by Federally- recognized Indian Tribes need take no action in regard to E.O. 12372:

All States and Territories except Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wyoming and Palau have elected to participate in the Executive Order process and have established Single Points of Contact (SPOCs). Applicants from these twenty-six jurisdictions need take no action regarding E.O. 12372. Applicants for projects to be administered by Federally-recognized Indian Tribes are also exempt from the requirements of E.O. 12372. Otherwise, applicants should contact their SPOCs as soon as possible to alert them of the prospective applications and receive any necessary instructions. Applicants must submit any required material to the SPOCs as soon as possible so that the program office can obtain and review SPOC comments as part of the award process. It is imperative that the applicant submit all required materials, if any, to the SPOC and indicate the date of this submittal (or the date of contact if no submittal is required) on the Standard Form 424, item 16a.

Although the jurisdictions listed above no longer participate in the process, entities which have met the eligibility requirements of the program are still eligible to apply for a grant even if a State, Territory, Commonwealth, etc. does not have a SPOC. All remaining jurisdictions participate in the Executive Order process and have established SPOCs. Applicants from participating jurisdictions should contact their SPOCs as soon as possible to alert them of the prospective applications and receive instructions. Applicants must submit any required material to the SPOCs as soon as possible so that the program office can obtain and review SPOC comments as part of the award process. The applicant must submit all required materials, if any, to the SPOC and indicate the date of this submittal (or the date of contact if no submittal is required) on the Standard Form 424, item 16a. Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application deadline to comment on proposed new or competing continuation awards.

SPOCs are encouraged to eliminate the submission of routine endorsements as official recommendations. Additionally, SPOCs are requested to clearly differentiate between mere advisory comments and those official State process recommendations which may trigger the "accommodate or explain" rule.

When comments are submitted directly to ACF, they should be addressed to: Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Division of Discretionary Grants, 370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW, Washington, D.C. 20447.

A list of the Single Points of Contact for each State and Territory is included with the application materials for this announcement.

D. The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-13)

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 40 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed and reviewing the collection information.

The project description is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139 which expires 12/31/2003.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

E. Screening, Review and Funding Process

When the Operations Center receives your application it will be screened to confirm that your application was received by the deadline. Federal staff will verify that you are an eligible applicant and that the application contains all the essential elements. Applications received from ineligible organizations and applications received after the deadline will be withdrawn from further consideration.

A panel of at least three reviewers (primarily experts from outside the Federal government) will use the evaluation criteria described in this announcement to evaluate each application. The reviewers will determine the strengths and weaknesses of each application, provide comments about the strengths and weaknesses and give each application a numerical score.

All applications will be reviewed and evaluated using four major criteria: (1) objectives and need for assistance, (2) approach, (3) organizational profiles, and (4) budget and budget justification. Each criterion has been assigned a point value that may vary from one priority area to another. The point values (summing up to 100) indicate the maximum numerical weight each criterion may be given in the review and evaluation process.

Reviewers also are evaluating the project products and materials that you propose. They will be interested in your plans for sustaining your project without Federal funds if the evaluation findings are supportive. Reviewers will be looking to see that the total budget you propose and the way you have apportioned that budget are appropriate and reasonable for the project you have described. Remember that the reviewers only have the information that you give them – it needs to be clear, complete, and concise.

The results of the competitive review are a primary factor in making funding decisions. In addition, Federal staff conducts administrative reviews of the applications and, in light of the results of the competitive review, will recommend applications for funding to the ACYF Commissioner. ACYF reserves the option of discussing applications with other funding sources when this is in the best interest of the Federal government. ACYF may also solicit and consider comments from ACF Regional Office staff in making funding decisions. ACYF may take into consideration the involvement (financial and/or programmatic) of the private sector, national, or State or community foundations; a favorable balance between Federal and non-Federal funds for the proposed project; or the potential for high benefit from low Federal investment. ACYF may elect not to fund any applicants having known management, fiscal, reporting, programmatic, or other problems which make it unlikely that they would be able to provide effective services or effectively complete the proposed activity.

With the results of the peer review and the information from Federal staff, the Commissioner of ACYF makes the final funding decisions. The Commissioner may give special consideration to applications proposing services of special interest to the Government and to achieve geographic distributions of grant awards. Applications of special interest may include, but are not limited to, applications focusing on unserved or inadequately served clients or service areas; programs addressing diverse ethnic populations; and projects that address the special initiatives.

Successful applicants will be receive a Financial Assistance Award which will set forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant or cooperative agreement, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-Federal share to be provided, if applicable, and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The Grants Management Office issues the award notice.

The Commissioner will notify organizations in writing when their applications will not be funded. Every effort will be made to notify all unsuccessful applicants as soon as possible after final decisions are made.

Applications will be reviewed summer 2003. Grant awards will have a start date no later than September 30, 2003.

PART IV. Assurances and Certifications

Copies of the following Forms, Assurances, and Certifications are included in this section:

Standard Form 424: Application for Federal Assistance

Standard Form 424A: Budget Information

Standard Form 424B: Assurances—Non-Construction Programs

Certification Regarding Debarment

Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace

Form LLL: Disclosure of Lobbying

Certification Regarding Environmental Tobacco Smoke

Standard Form 310: Protection of Human Subjects

State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) Listing (SPOC is not required for Adoption Opportunities applicants)

All forms are available online at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/grants/form.htm>

The SPOC listing is available on line at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>

Date: _____

Joan E. Ohl
Commissioner
Administration on Children, Youth and Families